

European Olympic Academies  
Lithuanian Olympic Academy

# **THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING AND PEACE**

Opportunities and Limits in the  
Context of Current Time

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Conference Proceedings  
EOA Seminar Klaipeda  
24-26 August 2022





## ABOUT THE SEMINAR

In 2022, the European Olympic Academies launched a new event series called "EOA Seminars". In this series of regional workshops, experts and NOA delegates explore current issues in the Olympic Movement and means to apply them to the practice of the National Olympic Academies. At the same time, this setting provides a forum for academies from neighbouring countries to meet and share their knowledge and expertise.

The first edition was hosted by the Lithuanian Olympic Academy on 24-26 August 2022 and geographically covered the north-east of Europe. In this framework, 15 delegates from Germany over Slovakia to Estonia met in the picturesque Baltic city of Klaipeda in Lithuania under the seminar theme "The Olympic Movement for international understanding and peace". The issue came to the fore with the current war of Russia in Ukraine, which, despite the suffering of Ukrainian society due to the cruelty of the war, has also caused massive damage to Ukrainian sport and led to Russia's and Belarus' suspension from the organised sport.

This volume contains the lectures given at the seminar.

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## WELCOME ADDRESS

*Prof. Dr. Manfred Laemmer  
European Olympic Academies*

Dear friends of the Olympic idea. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you here in Klaipeda, on the shores of the Baltic Sea, in a city with centuries of tradition and culture, to a seminar with



MANFRED LAEMMER

which the Association of the European National Olympic Academies presents a new format of its events. While the chain of statutory General Assemblies and Conferences we have held since our inception in Ljubljana in 2018 has not been interrupted by the pandemic, we have only been able to stage them physically once in 2019 in Cyprus and had to make do with online events.

Nevertheless, we have strengthened the communication between the Executive Board and our members on the one hand and among our members on the other through versatile public relations measures, thus maintaining the exchange of opinions and information. Today, we are more clearly perceived in the Olympic institutions in Europe than in the first two years. We have professionalised our work and created a secure organisational and financial basis. But all these measures and efforts cannot replace the personal human encounter that is an essential characteristic of sport. We hope to meet again in the usual way at our next Congress in November this year in Frankfurt. In view of this deficit, the Executive Board has decided to organise three regional seminars to discuss current topics and prob-

lems of the Olympic Movement and international sport. The first event of this kind, we have entrusted to the Lithuanian National Olympic Academy. Therefore, my thanks at this point go first to our colleague Prof. Dr. Asta Sarkauskiene, and the President of the Lithuanian National Olympic Committee, Daina Gudzineviciute, for preparing this meeting.

The topic we will deal with in the plenary and in working groups is determined by the sorrowful events that have kept the entire world on tenterhooks since 24 February this year and have created political and military tensions and economic problems the likes of which we have not seen since the Second World War. "Opportunities and limits of the Olympic Movement for international understanding and peace in the context of current time." The promotion of international understanding and peace, solidarity and cooperation is a central element of the Olympic idea and an obligation of the Olympic Charter, which forces us all to act: the IOC, the NOCs, the national and international sports federations as well as the scientific and meaningful institutions of the Olympic Movement, first and foremost the National Olympic Academies and their continental associations and the International Olympic Academy. The Olympic Movement has become a political actor. We are all called upon to find answers and solutions to the new problems that have arisen with unprecedented intensity.

We meet in a country that is in the immediate vicinity of the battlefield and that is itself directly touched and threatened by the events in Ukraine. Today, 24 August, Ukraine celebrates the 31st day of its independence. On this occasion, on behalf of the EOA Executive Board, I would like to convey our heartfelt congratulations to our colleagues in the Olympic institutions in Kyiv and assure them that we stand by their side and wish to see peace

restored to their region as soon as possible.

We are witnessing contradictory images these days: While brutal fighting rages in Ukraine, 1.2 million enthusiastic spectators watched the fascinating competitions of the European Championships in Munich last week, which once again showed the emotional potential of sport and the Olympic idea. At the same time, the 50th anniversary of the 1972 Olympic assassination, which we will remember in a few days, warns us not to expect too much.

Dear friends, it is not my intention to lecture here. For this purpose, we have invited experts who will speak after me. I wish us all inspiring discussions and fruitful results for our common cause.

Thank you very much for your attention.



## WAR IN UKRAINE: REACTION OF SPORTS POLITICS AND SPORTS UNIVERSITIES AND SUPPORT BY THE OLYMPIC COMMUNITY

Prof. Dr. Asta Sarkauskiene  
Lithuanian Olympic Academy

In the current time the most important word is peace. Today we will talk about our - the Olympic communities' - opportunities and limits for international understanding and peace.

### The Olympic Charter

The main written piece of the sports community is the Olympic Charter. This document, "as a basic instrument of a constitutional nature, sets forth and recalls the Fundamental Principles and essential values of Olympism." It further serves as statutes for the International Olympic Committee (IOC). In addition, the Charter defines the main reciprocal rights and obligations of the three main constituents of the Olympic Movement, namely the IOC, the International Federations (IFs) and the National Olympic Committees (NOCs).

In the context of peace, particular attention should be paid to three rules of the Charter:

- Rule 1. The Olympic Movement: [...] The goal of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport [...].
- Rule 2. The mission and role of the IOC to promote peace,

[...] to take action to strengthen the unity of the Olympic Movement, to protect its independence, to maintain and promote its political neutrality and to preserve the autonomy of sport, [...] to encourage and support the efforts of sports organizations and public authorities to provide for the social and professional future of athletes.

- Rule 5. Olympic Solidarity: The aim of Olympic Solidarity is to provide assistance to NOCs for athlete development programs, in particular those which have the greatest need of it.

The world, especially Europe, changed after February 24, 2022. Russia invaded Ukraine escalating the Russian-Ukrainian war that began in 2014. The invasion began on the morning of 24 February, when Putin announced a "special military operation". Now the question is: how to implement the Olympic Charter in this situation?

### Support of the Olympic Community for Ukraine

What actions did the sports community take after the Russian invasion over Ukraine on 24 February 2022? Support for Ukraine and its athletes was expressed by the main sports organisations, with the IOC and the International Olympic Academy (IOA) taking the lead. Four days after the Russian intervention, the IOC Executive Board announced on 28 February 2022:

"This is a dilemma which cannot be solved. The IOC EB has therefore today carefully considered the situation and, with a heavy heart, issued the following resolution: (1) In order to protect the integrity of global sports competitions and for the safety of all the participants, the EB recommends that International Sports Federations and sports event organisers not invite or allow the

*participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials in international competitions [...]"*

The IOA published a resolution on their website:

*"The International Olympic Academy unites its voice with the International Olympic Committee, firmly condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Any act of violation against independent nations and people is, in essence, an abusive offence of the fundamental values of Olympism, which aim towards peaceful, coexistence and solidarity. All the members, officials, and staff of the IOA are standing by the Ukrainian people and the athletes and we hope that the Russian troops will be withdrawn promptly from independent Ukraine. This moment we are all Ukrainians."*

On 22 April, two months following the invasion, IOC President Thomas Bach and the Ukrainian Minister for Youth and Sport, Vadym Guttsait, visited Ukrainian athletes living and training in Switzerland. Following an invitation by the National Olympic Committee of Ukraine, IOC President Thomas Bach visited Ukraine's capital Kyiv on July 4, 2022.

Since the start of the war, the IOC has led the solidarity efforts of the Olympic Movement to help the Olympic Community in Ukraine. The IOC has set up a Solidarity Fund and provided – together with Olympic Solidarity – USD 1 million. The European Olympic Committees (EOC) has provided funding of USD 0.5 million and about USD 0.5 million was received from other Olympic Movement stakeholders. Thomas Bach, during his visit to Kyiv, announced that the IOC was adding an extra USD 5 million to the aid fund, tripling its size to a total sum of USD 7.5 million.

### **The reaction of sport politics and sport universities**

On July 2, 2022, the sports ministers from 35 nations, including 25 European Union countries as well as Japan and the United

States, called on the International Federations to suspend their members from Russia and Belarus because of the war in Ukraine. The group of sports ministers has also recommended that all persons with close links to the Russian or Belarusian state, in particular government officials, be removed from any influential positions in sports organisations. The IFs and other event organisers should further consider suspending agreements that allow their competitions to be broadcast on Russian and Belarusian television, the collective of sports ministers further suggested. Many sports teams and fans expressed their support for the Ukrainian people. There were on-ice projections in Canada, players from Lithuania and other countries showing messages of solidarity to Ukraine. There were Ukrainian fans waving flags and banners to call up for peace and sympathy prior to the FIFA World Cup Qualifying Match between Wales and Ukraine in Cardiff.

After Russia's attack on Ukraine, the Lithuanian Minister of Education, Science and Sport, Jurgita Siugzdiniene, appealed to Lithuanian sports federations, clubs and athletes to end all sporting relations with Russia and Belarus, not to participate in competitions in these countries and not to accept any representatives of these countries.

"Sport is not above or beyond the limits of politics. That is why we, sports politicians, must stand firm and solidarize with national and international sports organizations, using broad opportunities of free and democratic nations to ensure that sport does not become a cover for war crimes and its supporters or doers. This message is important to sports organizations, as well as Russian and Belarussian athletes, who do not oppose their countries' criminal behavior," noted Minister J. Siugzdiniene.

Since the first days of the war, the government and people of

Lithuania have been providing huge assistance to Ukraine. The Klaipeda University (KU), in support of Ukraine, on the morning of February 24th raised a blue-yellow flag on the KU campus as a sign of solidarity with the Ukrainian nation. The university's rector, Prof. Dr. Arturas Razbadauskas met with young people from Ukraine studying at KU in the afternoon and ensured full support in solving problems that arise for them or their relatives from this war.

Not only Klaipeda University, but all Lithuanian universities provide support and assistance to Ukrainian students.

### Academic debate

April 8, 2022 saw the holding of an international seminar, entitled "Activities of Higher Education Institutions in Wartime". The main organiser was Assoc. Prof. Olga Kuvaldina from the Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding (Ukraine) who is currently working at Klaipeda University in the Department of Sport, Recreation and Tourism. The Lithuanian Science Council initiated a special programme to support the recruitment of scientists and doctoral students from Ukraine. The Lithuanian Olympic Academy invited representatives of Lithuanian universities to participate in the seminar. Representatives of three universities attended: Vilnius University, Vytautas Magnus University and Klaipeda University. Lecturers shared information about what kind of help their universities provide and asked what help was needed.

Also, we conducted an international research project, entitled "Protecting Ukraine's sporting talent: The Top 10 needs of Ukraine's Olympic sports in hostile conditions".

Now we come back to the fundamental principles of Olympism. The Olympic Movement shall apply political neutrality. How do

we understand this principle? Let us analyse the actual situation and look at two high-performance athletes who specialise in the high jump: Yulia Levchenko from Ukraine and Mariya Lasitskene from Russia. Yulia Levchenko was supposed to compete in the World Indoor Championships in Madrid on 2 March, but could not leave bombed Kiev.

"I am dying inside. Our people, our streets are dying. I am in Kiev and believe me, you can see anything here", she wrote in an Instagram post. "Russia attacked us. And now our life is not the same as always. What is happening now is biggest stupidity. In this century – to go to war on people. "

On March 3, Levchenko added "I have no words. It's pain and hell... Thanks to the whole world, thanks to those who don't shut up. I want to live at home! At home, in Kiev, in the Ukraine". The other side in Moscow on June 9: Maria Lasitskene penned an open letter to the President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach. In this letter she completely misses the point of the ban on Russian athletes due to the war in Ukraine. She also insults Bach, burying any chance of reconciliation.

"I have no doubt that you will not have the courage and dignity to remove the punishment from Russian athletes," she wrote. "After all, then you will have to admit that all these months you have violated the IOC Charter, and the charters of International Federations have turned from real documents into useless papers. But I ask you stop shifting responsibility for what is happening in the sports world from yourself to supposedly 'taking care of Russian athletes'. It is not for the IOC President to deal with such things." Finally, Lasitskene writes, "...I just want to be honest to myself, my fans and other young athletes. I want to receive that which is rightfully mine — the right to perform. That's what I'm fighting for!"

Yulia Levchenko retorted to Maria Lasickiene: "Even after the start of the war in Eastern Ukraine, we believed that not all Russians are the same. When the Russian athletes could compete again, I also wished them luck. [...] On February 24, a full-scale war against Ukraine began. I woke up at 4 am in the morning, shaking with fear, when a rocket passed 5 km from my house. I didn't know who to call first when I got a message from my coach telling me to pack up and run. At the same time, I did not receive a single message from Russian athletes. Even on the contrary, Russian sportswomen were almost unanimously in favor of the war and even took part in pro-war concerts. It is not about whether sports can be mixed with politics or not. Heck, it's about people's lives! Life! That's the most important thing, not all medals and records. Everyone should have the right to exist, to walk and breathe in peace: children, adults, and the elderly. Do you think that sport is more important than the human right to life? You can't compete just because you're Russian? And they kill us just because we are Ukrainians. Do you feel the difference?", asked Levchenko. This is one of the questions that will be further discussed in this seminar.



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## THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT AS A SOFT POWER IN THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

*Dr. Dionyssis Gangas  
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It is my pleasure to address you in this very interesting EOA Seminar under the general title "Opportunities and limits of the Olympic Movement for international understanding and peace in the context of current time". I am so happy to be among the distinguished scholars and long-time friends participating in this seminar and I am sure that their views on the main subject will contribute to a better understanding of the role that the Olympic Movement can play, if any, in situations like the one we are all facing these days, following the brutal invasion of Russia to Ukraine.

It is well known that in the past, scholars in the field of international relations have given little serious consideration to the place of sport in global human affairs. Only in the last 30 years has it been realised that sport should be given greater consideration in international relations.

The presence of President Samaranch at the helm of the International Olympic Committee for over 20 years undoubtedly marks this evolution. How much did international politics interfere in the course of the Olympic Movement over the years and in a parallel manner, how much did the Olympic Movement affect serious political developments?

It is true that the relationship between sports and politics has

always been one of the most controversial and contentious issues, both in terms of the content of the philosophy itself and its practical implementation by organised sport and, above all, the Olympic Games, which, curiously, have been studied by few analysts of the Olympic Movement. It is possible that this phenomenon has not been systematically studied because the interaction of sports and politics has been treated individually, rather than as branches of a single tree which gradually spread to encompass all aspects of the phenomenon of this relationship.

Moreover, the "keep sport and politics separate" dictum that prevailed in the Olympic Movement for many years (Avery-Brundage approach) seems to have hindered the study of sport in international relations curricula until recently. The irony is that sport has always been a rich source for the study of these issues, both applied and theoretical. Currently, for instance, sport makes an important contribution to issues such as globalization, international political negotiations and reconciliation, development of nation states, power relations, and international relations.

The Olympic Movement has already had more than 120 years of existence, with interruptions large and small, with victories and defeats in the struggle for survival, with challenges and compromises with the political powers that surround it. Olympism is an ideology that clearly aligns with the values of some, but not all nations, which makes it an inherently political project.

Sport is unusually free of constraints on the development of global markets for images and labour. Sport is an important part of the image of nations and states and of the socialization process of young people in global society. Nevertheless, the sports dimension of international relations often still plays just a minor

role in education in this subject.

As Lincoln Allison notes, "states have used sport in two principal ways: to sell themselves and enhance their image, and to penalize international behaviour of which they disapprove. Even at this preliminary stage it must be remarked that each of these categories divides further into two. The 'image enhancement' effect can be a question of success or merely of acceptance.

It is known that during the Cold War period in sports the Soviet Union always proceeded from the idea that "a victory in sports is a victory for the Soviet social form and the socialist sports system. It is a proof of the superiority of the socialist culture over the decaying culture of the bourgeois capitalists' states'. The drive to win international competitions was thus a kind of 'hearts and minds' campaign to convince crowds outside the borders of the Soviet 'way of life'.

Many states utilized sports merely to symbolize their acceptance in the international community. It has been widely argued that China's enthusiasm for the Olympics is principally motivated by a desire to secure and demonstrate its acceptance as a mature state in the international system. In a strictly diplomatic sense, the way the IOC handled the case of divided Germany, the China vs. Chinese Taipei and lately the case of North and South Korea, clearly shows the positive role that the Olympic Movement can play in international politics today.

However, during the period of the Cold War and the emergence of the new states, the so-called Third World States, the politics of international sports have become overtly coercive, from the moment that states introduced sporting boycotts as sanctions against the behaviour of other states, whose political systems they disapprove. The boycott of the Moscow Games by the so-called Western countries in 1980, the consequent boycott of

the Los Angeles Games four years later by the Soviet Union and its satellite States, and the successful threat by many African states to boycott the 1964 Tokyo Games if South Africa participated in the Games are clear examples of how politics attempts to use the Olympic Games for purely political motives. George Orwell characterized international sports very aptly as "war without shooting."

During more than 120 years of its existence, the relationship of the Olympic Movement and politics has gone through three major historic phases.

The first begins with Coubertin's noble idea of reviving the Olympic Games and extends to just before World War II. It was an era when the Games had not yet been established as a global celebration of sport and culture and therefore were not beneficial for political exploitation in the ultra-conservative society of Europe at the beginning of the last century.

The second phase of the sports and politics relationship began immediately after the end of World War II and lasted until the fall of the Berlin Wall and the parallel fall of communism and the Soviet ideological and political domination over several independent States. This was the most problematic period of the Olympic Movement and the IOC itself. The political rivalry between the two super-powers and their satellites became more intense. The Olympic athletes were no longer selfless amateurs! They slowly became valuable pawns on the political chess board. In this period, the values advocated by Olympism were tested. At the end of this phase, the IOC was wounded by the extreme political pressure it had faced, but eventually, it prevailed and even emerged stronger. For more than 30 years, this struggle gave the impression that the Movement was completely politicized. However, such an approach proved to be wrong

because as soon as the bipolar adversity ceased de facto to exist, the Movement showed itself strong again and ready for the next challenge, namely to become the "soft power" in the interstate battle that could jeopardize the world peace.

The third phase is the one we have witnessed over the last 30 years, in which political interference has all but disappeared from Olympic events and the IOC is imposing its own terms on the relationship between sports and politics. Economic and ideological rivalries have declined dramatically, and however things turn out, it is the politicians and governments that seek help from the Olympic Movement for their efforts of bringing peoples together in peace. It seemed, there were no longer reasons to boycott the Games and the causes for violating human rights seemed to be significantly smaller. Now the Movement, in cooperation with the UN, which has asserted its strength and autonomy worldwide, is called upon to play a far more creative role, whose aim is world peace.

On February 7th 2019, the one-year anniversary of the opening of PyeongChang Winter Games, IOC President Bach recalled the joint entry of athletes from the National Olympic Committees of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at the Opening Ceremony as one team, united behind one flag – the flag of Korean Unification – and delivered a heartfelt message: "With these powerful symbols in PyeongChang, we saw how the Olympic Games can open the way to dialogue, how the Olympic Values can open the way to a more peaceful future. {...} Sport must continue to build bridges and show what it can do to bring people together."

Undoubtedly, nowadays the Olympic Movement can be used as an instrument of "soft power" both at the international and national level in many cases. And although throughout its ex-

istence it has tried desperately to stay away from politics, it has never achieved this goal. The Olympic Movement, which has finally freed itself from the constraints of political expediency, does not aspire to play a transcendent and decisive role on the international political stage! It is simply able to assert its own independence in a certain manner by establishing its autonomy, which leads to a gradual reversal of the relationship.

It seems that the Olympic Movement has gained the momentum it has sought since its foundation, namely to gradually become a respected "soft political power" in the realm of international politics. According to Pere Miro, the current IOC Deputy Director, "The structure of the Olympic Movement is key for developing sports diplomacy, as it gives the capacity to operate in developing the Olympic Values and bringing people together". In the name of the Olympic Movement's principle of universality, the IOC has spearheaded numerous diplomatic initiatives, using the power of sport to promote understanding and cooperation.

Some of the most prominent examples of this are: the final agreement to host the Olympic Committees of China and Chinese Taipei in 1981, the active support for the establishment of the National Olympic Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina after the Yugoslav war, promoting cooperation between countries with difficult diplomatic relations (South Korea and North Korea, Israel and Palestine, etc.), supporting the reconstruction of the Iraqi NOC after the Iraq War in 2003 and, more recently, the recognition of the Kosovo Olympic Committee.

No less important is the IOC's decision to promote solidarity with political refugees by allowing them to participate in the Games as a separate group under the IOC flag. This is another clear demonstration of the dynamic that the Olympic Movement has developed in our days, and an even more substantial

demonstration of the "soft power" of political intervention in international affairs. The decision on the participation of refugees under the IOC flag has perhaps also revealed, even more clearly, the modern, different approach of the Olympic Movement to burning political issues – a resolute response that has been expressed only hesitantly in the past.

Perhaps the decision to allow refugees to participate in the Games under the IOC flag shows more clearly how modern and different the Olympic Movement is in its approach to hot political issues, a decisive approach that it would have been reluctant to take in the past. Is this a solution that should be considered on other occasions, too?

Dear friends, the recent developments in Ukraine with the Russian invasion and the loss of thousands of civilians cannot leave us all, supporters of Olympism and world peace, indifferent. It is certain that excommunications, resolutions of condemnation, protest rallies, fiery articles in the press and scientific analyses against Russia will not produce radical results.

The question is if the Olympic Movement can do anything about this brutality? The answer simply is: "unfortunately no". Can the IOC exercise this "soft power" it possesses to influence today's situation to some extent? Again, the realistic answer is "no".

This is exactly what IOC President Thomas Bach said in other words in his editorial in the last IOC Review, where he stated straightforwardly: "We recommended that no Russian or Belarussian athletes be permitted to take part in international competitions... But let us be very clear, these measures are not intended to punish the Russian or Belarussian athletes for the actions of their governments. On the contrary, they are intended to both protect them and the integrity of competitions. Protect the athletes from anti-Russian and anti-Belarussian sentiment,

but also protect the integrity of competitions as some governments are pressuring their athletes not to compete against Russian and Belarussian athletes. Of course, this confronts us with a seemingly irreconcilable dilemma: our core mission is to bring the entire world together in peaceful competition. Clearly, at present, we are unable to do this. But to those who question our approach, we would say that extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures!"

However, the decision above has been criticised, and not unjustifiably, I believe, without being misunderstood. Academically speaking: could a complete exclusion of athletes from sporting events be glossed over as a form of "boycott" against people who might disagree at all with their government's central decision to break the Olympic Truce and invade an independent country?

How "political" does the decision to exclude all athletes from exercising their right to sport, a right that is a fundamental principle of the IOC Charter itself, appear? Yes, the IOC protects the integrity of the competitions by excluding the participation of these athletes, but at the same time the IOC seems somehow bent by the threats of other governments to boycott their competitions.

So instead of punishing governments through their respective NOCs for threatening to boycott international competitions, the Olympic Movement is close to "boycotting" athletes..

Although my personal feelings towards Ukraine and the innocent victims of this brutal invasion are very strong, as a scholar and researcher I keep thinking that perhaps a more acceptable solution would have been to allow the Russian and Belarussian athletes to participate in all competitions wearing the IOC badge or flag, especially because it would have been a fair deci-

sion based on the fourth fundamental principle: the practice of sport is a human right.



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## **SPORT BETWEEN ITS OWN WORLD AND THE POLITICAL REALITY: A HISTORY OF THE MODERN OLYMPIC GAMES – AN OVERVIEW**

*Dr. Ansgar Molzberger  
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### **Introduction**

If we take a look at the current Olympic Charter (2021), one of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism says that sports organisations within the Olympic Movement shall apply political neutrality. Furthermore, they have the rights and obligations of autonomy. Moreover, the Olympic Charter defines the Olympic Games as competitions between athletes, not between countries. At the same time, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is listed to be the leader of the Olympic Movement with rights over the Olympic Games and Olympic properties.

However, the Olympic Games are more than an international sports festival. Rather, they are based on a specific meaning defined by the French baron Pierre de Coubertin (1863-1937) at the end of the 19th century. Moreover, the Olympic Games have become a global phenomenon receiving the widest possible attention and constantly interacting with the social, cultural and political zeitgeist. Or, as the title of this presentation says: from their beginnings, the Olympic Games have always been in tension between their own world and the political reality.

In this presentation, the challenges facing the Olympic Movement today will be discussed against the background of specific

examples from its history. Crucial developments will be presented in a condensed form and especially from a German perspective: After all, the 1916 Olympic Games, which were awarded to Berlin but fell victim to World War I, and even more so the 1936 Olympic (Winter) Games in Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Berlin are apt examples of the clash of sport with political reality. Other examples to be mentioned in this presentation are the united German team after the Second World War and the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich with the shocking assassination of the Israeli team.

At the end, the era of extensive political boycotts of the Olympic Games in the 1970s and 1980s and today's scenery of the professionalised and commercialised Olympic sport world are addressed.

### **1896 to 1916 – The first years of the modern Olympic Games**

On 6 April 1896, the Greek King George I (1845-1913) opened for the first time the feast that is today the largest sporting event in the world. The highlight of the Olympic Games in Athens was the marathon race, a competition created for 1896, based on the ancient legend of the messenger race from Marathon to Athens, which became a crowd puller. With the conclusion of the event on 15 April 1896, a good 250 athletes – women were not permitted – had competed in the disciplines of fencing, weightlifting, athletics, cycling, wrestling, shooting, swimming, tennis and gymnastics.

After the successful premiere, Coubertin as IOC President and the IOC members had to accept that compromises had to be made to keep the Olympic Games alive. Thus, in the following years, they were integrated into (world) exhibitions, as they did not seem strong enough as an independent event. The lack of

independence was accepted, but especially the Games of Paris (1900) and St. Louis (1904) were perceived by many contemporaries merely as a programme item of the world exhibitions taking place there. The Olympic Games in London (1908) were also part of such a show, the international "Franco-British Exhibition". The breakthrough for the Olympic Movement was the Olympic Games in Stockholm in 1912, which represented an independent and compactly organised festive event. However, the Stockholm Games not only showed the world the positive potential of the Olympic Movement, the problems in the planning and implementation of the Olympic Games and their sporting competitions also provided the impetus for an urgently needed standardisation. Until then, there were only a few international professional associations and the organisers of the Olympic Games had to create and communicate their own set of rules every four years – a constant cause for discussion between the hosts and the Coubertin-led IOC as well as the participating teams from different countries.

In the early years of the Olympic Movement, the "sporting geography" favoured by the IOC also led to sometimes heated discussions. This specific geography included the right of athletes from states that were not yet sovereign at the time but were recognised by the IOC, such as Bohemia, Hungary and Finland, to participate in the Olympic Games. As this situation did not correspond to the state-political reality, the "sporting geography" meant that controversial issues had to be clarified not only with the various National Olympic Committees (NOC), but also with the political and diplomatic bodies.

Moreover, the First World War, which broke out in the summer of 1914, became a caesura that threatened the existence of the Olympic Movement. Despite the Olympic idea of uniting na-

tions, the nationally heated mood in many European countries over several years now erupted on the battlefields of the First World War. The initial hope that the 1916 Olympic Games, which the IOC had awarded to Berlin in 1912, could still take place after an early peace agreement was dashed as the war continued. In 1916, the cancellation of the Games finally became a certainty, even though they were not officially cancelled.

### **1936 – Olympic Games in National Socialist Germany**

Shortly after the end of the First World War, Coubertin endeavoured to reactivate the Olympic Movement. In 1919, the IOC met again for the first time. Antwerp in Belgium was chosen as the venue for the 1920 Olympic Games. German athletes were excluded from them – and from the 1924 Olympic Games – because of the war guilt attributed to Germany. At that time, the horrors of war were still too present for all athletes to come together in the spirit of the Olympic idea. In the German Reich, on the other hand, they themselves had already turned their backs on the Olympic Movement in 1917. It took until 1928 for German athletes to enter the Olympic stage again. Afterwards, encouraged by a successful performance, the German sport officials strived for more: Berlin successfully applied for the 1936 Olympic Games, the IOC awarded the Games in 1931.

However, with the National Socialists coming to power in Germany in 1933, the dream of "Olympia in Berlin" had to be called into question again, as the new rulers had shown themselves to be resolute opponents of the Olympic Movement during the 1920s. Nevertheless, the new Reich Chancellor Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) publicly spoke out in favour of holding the Olympic Games – and the 1936 Olympic Winter Games in Garmisch-Partenkirchen –, recognising in them a unique opportunity for National Socialist

Germany to present itself. The Games were declared a "national task" and henceforth lavishly financed.

Nevertheless, before the Games, the aggressively anti-Semitic policies of the National Socialists had provoked strong international protests at an early stage, especially in the USA, and a boycott discussion had arisen. The IOC demanded a guarantee from the organisers to comply with the Olympic rules in 1936. This was given in 1934, but after the passing of the anti-Semitic "Nuremberg Laws" in 1935, international protest against the German regime grew once again. The worried IOC President Henri de Baillet-Latour (1876-1942) arranged a meeting with Hitler, who also assured him that the Olympic rules would be observed at the Games. After a narrow vote by the US-American NOC in December 1935 in favour of participation in the 1936 Olympic Games – especially the influential sports official and later IOC President Avery Brundage (1887-1975) had spoken out in favour of sending the US team to Berlin – the international boycott movement failed.

During the 1936 Olympic (Winter) Games, in order to hide the true face of the "Third Reich", those in power forbade anti-Semitic and racist hostilities in the German press and in the public. It was intended to create the image of a peace-loving Germany that respected human rights. The reality of the National Socialist dictatorship, on the other hand, was to remain largely hidden from foreign observers.

In addition, the perfect organisation, excellently designed competition venues, an impressive staging and, last but not least, the most modern use of media – television celebrated its premiere at the Olympic Games and the director Leni Riefenstahl (1902-2003) staged the Berlin event cinematically with her famous Olympic film, which is still intensively discussed today –

set new standards. Large parts of the sports world succumbed to the illusion of a peace-loving Germany. Nevertheless, international press reports showed that there were indeed people who unmasked the illusion staged by those in power and reported critically on the true conditions in National Socialist Germany in 1936.

Eventually, in 1939, National Socialist Germany openly showed its true face when it invaded Poland on 1 September 1939. The following Second World War made it impossible to hold the Olympic Games in 1940 and 1944.

### **The Olympic Movement after the Second World War – "Querelle d'allemand"**

After the Second World War, Germany was excluded from the Olympic Movement again – the National Socialist atrocities were too present in the international community, and Germany, occupied by the victorious powers of the Second World War, also lacked the necessary sports structures. In Western Germany, it was not until the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949 that the renewed "return to Olympia" could be successfully initiated. A NOC was founded and in 1951, it was recognised by the IOC. The formal requirements for participation in the 1952 Olympic (Winter) Games were thus fulfilled.

However, when the socialist GDR, also founded in 1949, at the behest of the Soviet Union – which had abandoned its anti-Olympic stance and henceforth also wanted to take part in the Olympic Games – founded its own NOC in 1951, a German-German issue arose that was to preoccupy international sports politics time and again in the following years. In the run-up to the founding of the NOC in the GDR, the West had renamed its own institution "NOC for Germany" in order to underpin Germany's claim to sole

representation – in line with federal policy. The IOC with the US-American Avery Brundage as President followed this view and initially refused to recognise the GDR's NOC. Only after the "provisional" recognition in 1955, GDR athletes were allowed to take part in the Olympic Games from 1956 onwards, but first only as part of an all-German team. This construct, which continued until 1964 – a sign of the IOC's desire to defy the political reality of German division – presented a major challenge for sports policy from then on. Not least because, with a view to the 1964 Olympic Games, even the breakdown of inner-German sports relations after the construction of the Berlin Wall had to be overcome.

After the IOC finally granted the GDR independence in 1965, separate German teams competed for the first time at the 1968 Olympic Games. However, the common neutral flag (black-red-gold with Olympic rings) and anthem (Beethoven's "Ode to Joy") remained as a unifying element from the previous years.

### **Olympic Games in Munich 1972 and the realignment of the Olympic Movement**

For the West German officials, the division of the all-German team into two separate teams meant a political defeat. But at the same time it became an impulse to set an example in sports policy: The Federal German sports officials with NOC President Willi Daume (1913-1996) at the helm wanted to send Munich into the race to host the 1972 Olympic Games. One day before the turn of the year 1965/66, the Olympic bid was submitted to the IOC. In the election in April 1966, Munich prevailed over the competing cities of Montreal, Madrid and Detroit.

The organising committee for the 1972 Olympic Games was founded in 1966. Daume in particular envisaged an Olympic syn-

thesis of the arts with a colourful and cheerful character. In this way, the officials wanted to show the international community a completely different Germany than the one of 1936. Central tasks for the organisers were the construction of new, architecturally modern sports facilities and a staging characterised by friendliness and cheerfulness.

At the same time, however, the work of the organising committee also took place against the background of the Cold War, with German-German politics in particular posing a challenge: In 1972, the GDR was to make its first Olympic appearance as a sovereign state with the presentation of its own flag and anthem – an act that had been forbidden on Federal German soil until then. Accordingly, the opening ceremony on 26 August 1972, which was held in front of the eyes of the sporting world, was symbolically charged.

On 5 September 1972, however, both the staged lightness of the Olympic Games and the sporting competition receded into the background: the attack by the Palestinian terrorist group "Black September" on the Israeli team in the Olympic Village came as a shock to the Olympic Movement. After the failed attempt to free the hostages at Fürstfeldbruck airport, eleven Israeli athletes and officials were dead. A German policeman and five hostage-takers were also killed.

The assassination meant the end of the "cheerful games", but not of the 1972 Olympic Games. After a central mourning ceremony in the Olympic Stadium, the competitions were resumed on 7 September 1972 – with Israel's approval – in accordance with the sentence "The Games must go on!" pronounced by IOC President Avery Brundage at the ceremony the previous day.

As is well known, the Olympic Games continued in the following period. However, the Games became more and more the

plaything of political interests. In particular, the comprehensive Olympic boycotts of the 1970s and 1980s became an existential threat. Decisive impulses for the reorientation of the Olympic Movement came from the 11th Olympic Congress held in Baden-Baden in 1981: Under the IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch (1920-2010), who had been in office since 1980, the ban on participation for professional athletes, which had been strictly applicable until then, was liberalised after the maintenance of the traditional amateur clause had proved to be no longer feasible. Furthermore, it was decided to market the Olympic Games, and the IOC with its "capital" from the Olympic rings known worldwide was able to develop into a global player in the following years and financially support the international Olympic Movement and the NOCs.

### Conclusion

Nonetheless, the Olympic Movement has never ceased to be a political phenomenon as well: This can be seen, for example, in several Korean initiatives in recent decades to appear together at the Olympic Games. This idea of overcoming political division through united activities within the sporting world is countered by the current situation with regard to Russia and Belarus: On the recommendation of the IOC, athletes from both countries have been largely excluded from international competitive sport as a reaction to the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.



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## THE OLYMPIC TRUCE: HISTORY AND MODERNITY

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The tradition of the "Olympic Truce" or "Ekecheiria" was established in ancient Greece in the 8th century BC by the signing of a treaty between three kings – Iphitos of Elis, Cleosthenes of Pisa and Lycurgos of Sparta – to allow safe participation in the ancient Olympic Games for all athletes and spectators from Greek city states, which were otherwise almost constantly engaged in conflict with each other.

Iphitos and Lycurgos had drawn up a charter of the Sacred Truce based on the principle of the Olympic Games. The most relevant condition of the truce was a ban on hostilities. In case of non-compliance with this condition, those found guilty were heavily fined and unqualified to compete in the Olympic Games. Shortly before the opening of the Games, three spondophoroi, the heralds, carrying wreaths of wild olive, left Elis to proclaim the Truce. This ritual originally lasted one month but was gradually extended (from the fifth century BC) to three months (from the date of the spondophoroi's departure).

During the Sacred Truce, the athletes and spectators could travel to Olympia in complete safety. Hostile acts were not tolerated in the region of Elis and no one was allowed to enter it armed. Any violation of the Truce was regarded as an affront to Zeus himself, to whom the entire event was dedicated.

The main initiator of the revival of the Olympic tradition, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, placed great emphasis in his works on the

proclamation of the humanistic values of the Olympic Movement, which he set out in his "Ode to Sport". His world view, the culmination of his philosophy, is expressed in the couplet "O sport, you are Peace!"

The idea of peaceful coexistence between peoples found expression in the Olympic symbol personally drawn by Pierre de Coubertin.

The theme of Peace pervades the Olympic Charter.

Recognizing that sport takes place within the framework of society, sports organisations within the Olympic Movement exercise political neutrality. They have the rights and duties of autonomy, which include freely establishing and controlling the rules of sport, determining the structure and governance of their organisations, enjoying the right of elections free from any outside influence and the responsibility for ensuring that principles of good governance be applied.

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Olympic Charter shall be secured without discrimination of any kind on any ground such as race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

The International Olympic Committee imposed strict penalties on peacebreakers. Athletes from Germany and its allies in the First World War (Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, the Ottoman Empire, etc.) were not invited to the 1920 Olympic Games in Antwerp.

Germany and Japan, as the countries that unleashed the Second World War, were expelled from the IOC and were not given the right to participate in the Games of the XIV Olympiad in 1948 in London.

In 1992, the IOC urged the world community to return to the

tradition of Ekecheiria and to cease all hostilities during and immediately after the Games.

Since 1993, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly has repeatedly expressed its support for the Olympic Truce ideal and for IOC's mission by adopting every two years – one year before each edition of the Olympic Games – a resolution entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal".

In the framework of promoting peace through sport and the Olympic ideal, the International Olympic Truce Centre (IOTC) was founded in July 2000 through a joint initiative of the IOC and Greece.

The Olympic Truce is symbolised by the dove of peace with the traditional Olympic flame in the background. In a world plagued by wars and animosity, the peace-dove symbol represents one of the IOC's ideals of building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal. The Olympic flame has brought warm friendship to all the people of the world through exchange and global togetherness. In the symbol, the flame is made up of colourful, effervescent elements that are reminiscent of festivities experienced in the celebration of the human spirit. These elements represent people of all races coming together to observe the truce.

The UNESCO Centre for Peace is a non-profit organisation founded in 2004 in Maryland, USA. It promotes the ideas of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

The United Nations General Assembly, strongly supported by all its member states, has requested those states on several occasions to observe the Olympic Truce, individually and collectively, by means of the following resolutions:

- Observance of the Olympic Truce (25 October 1993)
- Olympic Ideal (7 December 1994, 21 November 1995)
- United Nations Millennium Declaration (8 September 2000)
- Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace (3 November 2003).
- Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal

(8 December 1997, 24 November 1999, 11 December 2001, 3 November 2003, 3 November 2005, 31 October 2007, 19 October 2009, 17 October 2011, 6 November 2013, 26 October 2015, 13 November 2017, 9 December 2019, 6 December 2021)...

The Declaration of World Personalities on the Olympic Truce has been signed by more than 10,000 personalities worldwide so far.

"Today, the Olympic Truce has become an expression of mankind's desire to build a world based on the rules of fair competition, humanity, reconciliation and tolerance. Moreover, the Olympic Truce epitomizes a bridge from the old and wise tradition to the most compelling purpose of today's world: the maintenance of international peace and the promotion of multicultural dialogue, cooperation and understanding. The period of the Olympic Games, and beyond, should provide an opportunity for such a dialogue and the search for durable solutions for the restoration of peace in all areas of conflict, where the first victims are children, youth, women and the aged. Humanity's quest is for a world free of hatred, terrorism and war, where ideals of peace, goodwill and mutual respect form the basis of relations among peoples and countries. The goal may still remain elusive, but if the Olympic Truce can help us to bring about even a brief respite from conflict and strife, it will send a powerful message

of hope to the international community".

The Olympic Truce has been violated several times since its revival in 1992: Bosnian War (1992 – 1995), War in Afghanistan (2001 – 2021), Iraqi War (2003 – 2011), Russian-Georgian War (armed conflict in South Ossetia, 2008), Russian annexation of Crimea (2014), Russian invasion of Ukraine (2022).

### Ukrainian sport

Ukraine is a great Olympic country with significant history. Since 1952, Ukrainian athletes have been active members of the International Olympic Movement.

At nine Olympic Games and ten Winter Olympic Games (1952-1988), Ukrainian athletes won 284 Olympic medals as part of the USSR national team, including 125 gold, 86 silver and 73 bronze medals in individual and team events.

As a member of the CIS national team (1992), Ukrainian athletes won 32 Olympic medals, including 9 gold, 14 silver and 9 bronze medals in individual and team events.

Under the auspices of the NOC of Ukraine, our athletes have won 148 Olympic medals during the years of Ukraine's independence (1994-2022), including 38 gold, 38 silver and 72 bronze medals in individual and team events.

The tragic events of February 24, 2022 turned life in the country around once and for all, the construction of sports facilities under the country's presidential program was suspended. In Ukraine during the period of hostilities for February-August 2022, there were about 100 sports facilities destroyed, 809 sports schools, sports boarding schools and Olympic training centres continued to work, and 313 have ceased to exist.

On January 1, 2022 there were 11,165 coaches in the country, of whom 4,375 continue to work; 385,808 athletes - students of

physical culture and sports institutions (sports colleges, Olympic training centres, youth sports schools, sports boarding schools), of whom 164,532 continue to train at their place of residence (27,012 train abroad; 39,490 train outside the educational institution) and 154,774 have no opportunity to train at all.

The International Olympic Committee, the European Olympic Committees, the International Olympic Academy and the European Olympic Academies reacted immediately to Russia's military aggression and unequivocally condemned the perfidious invasion of the territory of sovereign Ukraine.

The IOC has acted in two ways: sanctions on the one hand and protective measures on the other:

- The IOC condemned the blatant violation of the Olympic Truce on the day of the invasion and
- sanctioned the Russian and Belarusian states and governments responsible for this war.
- The IOC recommended that no international sporting events be held in Russia and Belarus,
- a ban of national symbols being displayed, and the
- withdrawing Olympic Orders awarded to the President and the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation.
- The IOC recommended to take protective measures – not sanctions – to protect the integrity of competitions (to ensure the safety of the Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials).

The Olympic Movement keeps up the momentum in support of Ukrainian sport community. The Olympic Movement follows the International Olympic Committee (IOC) pledge to continue and even increase its support for Ukrainian athletes. The pledge was

made by IOC President Thomas Bach during his visit to Ukraine in July 2022.

"Give peace a chance", said the IOC President Thomas Bach on the final day of the 2022 Winter Olympic Games in Beijing. "Our Olympic mission is not a political mission. Our Olympic mission is a humanitarian mission," he told the 139th International Olympic Committee (IOC) Session, on 20 May 2022.

During his recent visit to Kiev at the invitation of the Ukrainian NOC, President Bach announced that the IOC will increase the aid fund by a further USD 5 million, tripling it to USD 7.5 million, with a view to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games and the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games.

The entire Olympic community began to provide bilateral assistance to the Ukrainian sports community. Since the invasion of Ukraine by the Belarus-backed Russian army in February, the IOC has been coordinating the support for more than 3,000 Ukrainian athletes both at home and abroad by the establishment of a solidarity fund and a task force led by Olympic champion Sergey Bubka, President of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) of Ukraine and an IOC Member.

It can be stated with optimism that after more than five months, these acts of solidarity with the Ukrainian sports community have not only been sustained but also reinforced by the Olympic Movement. It indeed makes Ukrainian athletes feel like they are not alone in such terrible times, especially now when their priority becomes the preparations for Paris 2024, with the beginning of the qualifiers, and Milano Cortina 2026.

The new Olympic motto pays tribute to the unifying power of sport and the importance of solidarity. Its essence is expressed in efficiency and consonant with the era: "Faster, Higher, Stronger - Together".



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# THE POWER OF SPORT IN PEACE-MAKING AND PEACEKEEPING

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## Introduction

This paper provides an analysis of the internal values and the internal logic of sport, which combine to 'make peace' via their isomorphism with political liberalism, especially the liberal ideas of equality, respect, mutuality and other 'human rights' values. It is not only just sport's popularity, but also this peacemaking capacity of sport, which informs its peacekeeping potential.

The paper argues that sport is not about conflict but competition; not about violence but controlled aggression; neither is it amoral and value-free but is itself a moral enterprise. Thus, it takes a contrary view to those who think that sport itself is a form of violent conflict, and so is antithetical to peace promotion; and those who think that sport has no (intrinsic) values. So, to begin with, we must clear the ground by identifying and rectifying three important mistakes, all expressed in the previous sentence, which have led to confusion and obstructed our vision of the nature of sport.

## Three important mistakes

### 1. Conflict and competition

The first mistake is the failure to distinguish between conflict and competition. Kvalsund draws attention to what he sees as the dangers of using sport for peace-building purposes. He says: Sport, in its traditional form, is not a conflict preventative instru-

ment. On the contrary, the nature of sport is exactly the opposite: 'a physical contest between people or teams with different goals'.

To begin with, this description of sport is contentious. Contestants do not have different goals (if this means 'aims'). Because of the rule-structures of sport, we all have the same aims – otherwise we could not compete. Of course, I am trying to score at this end, and you at that end – but we both are trying to score under the same rules. The important point here is that Kvalsund's misleading definition leads him to confuse competition with conflict – and they are very different, as I explain below. Furthermore, Kvalsund believes that we shall need highly trained operatives in the field to make good the moral shortcomings of 'traditional' sport.

On this account of sport, its very nature provides two massive problems for peacekeepers: they take the risk of pouring oil on the flames of conflict, by imitating war games, and they must accept the huge expense of compensatory provision. This leaves it totally unexplained as to why international agencies would think to employ such a flawed and inappropriate instrument to the task of peace building. Why choose sport, when its nature, according to Kvalsund, is 'exactly the opposite' to the task? Why choose sport, when it therefore requires such a level of externally provided resources to mitigate its shortcomings? The answer, of course, is that those agencies understand that sporting competition is something quite different from conflict.

The historical transition from conflict to sporting competition may be illustrated with the example of the mythical origins of the Olympic Games. The myth of Pelops, one of the many myths that seek to explain the origin of the Olympic Games, tells the story of the fall of Oenomaus, King of Pisa, who challenged all

suitors for his daughter Hippodamea to a chariot race. During the race, he would kill each of his adversaries and then place their heads among his trophies. Naturally, this discouraged young men from seeking his daughter's hand, until the arrival of Pelops. He was both fortunate, because Hippodamea fell in love with him at first sight, and also clever, because he realized what was going on. He conspired with Oenomaus' charioteer, Myrtilus, and during the race managed to throw Oenomaus from his chariot to his death. Pelops won both Hippodamea and the kingdom, but he killed Myrtilus for his treason. To appease the Gods for his murderous wrongdoing, so the myth goes, Pelops established the Olympic Games.

The myth of Pelops echoes down to the twentieth century, when George Orwell described modern sport as 'war minus the shooting', and Chris Chataway, an Olympic athlete, co-authored a book called *War Without Weapons*. The earlier form of contest was that of mortal combat, in which the triumph of the victor meant the death of the adversary. In the Olympic Games, however, contest took on the nobler form of rule-governed and disciplined athletic competition. The lesson of the myth is that the chariot race between Pelops and Oenomaus was to be the last deadly incident in the sacred site of Olympia. The propensity for murder was 'civilised' and became the drive for victory on the athletic field. This shift from primitive mortal combat to fair and peaceful competition constitutes the starting point of the Olympic Games.

Now, we do not have to believe in the myth to be able to appreciate its point: sport is not war. Even in boxing, which seems to permit violence, it is only limited and carefully circumscribed assaults that are permitted. So, for example, a boxer cannot be hit when down, or under the belt, or with a rabbit-punch, or be-

tween rounds. He cannot be kicked or head butted or elbowed, or hit with weighted gloves or set upon by more than one opponent. Such considerations indicate the distinctions between boxing and street fighting. The crucial difference is that boxing is a rule-governed contest, and so has certain values built into it. Boxing is a competition – but not unarmed 'conflict', never mind armed mortal combat.

But there is a further feature of rule-governed competition, such as in sport: the constitutive rules of the sport prescribe modes of cooperation without which the activity cannot proceed. And good competition arises out of the relative equality of participants. That is to say: sport is not to be characterized as a conflict to establish superiority. The foundational values of competitive sport include cooperation and equality, which provide the context for competitive activity.

Oft-quoted examples of people fighting over sport (such as hooligans outside the stadium, or armies on the battlefield) are irrelevant to the above points. People fight over love and religion, too – but the fact that love (or religion, or sport) can be the occasion for conflict tells us nothing about the intrinsic character of love (or religion, or sport).

## **2. Violence and aggression**

The second mistake is the failure to distinguish between violence and aggression. For example, in a recent article on sport, peacekeeping and the prevention of violent conflict, Schwery and Eggenberger-Argote write:

*... aggression is defined as behaviour which aims to injure or harm the opponent. There is a distinction between hostile and instrumental aggression: the former primarily aims at injuring the*

*opponent, whereas the latter type serves in achieving a sporting goal (e.g. winning points). Different studies have demonstrated that sports activity may very well lead to a channelling of aggression and that there is a negative correlation between the amount of training and the tendency to use violence.*

Here, aggression is confusingly defined as aiming to injure or harm, which is surely false. I can be aggressive without seeking to harm. Then, the distinction between hostile and instrumental aggression seems to concede this point, suggesting that instrumental aggression does not seek harm. But this is false, too, for I either may or may not aim to harm someone whilst achieving my sporting goal. Finally, the notion of violence belatedly enters the picture from nowhere, without explanation or definition.

A simple and much clearer distinction might go as follows: aggression involves forceful assertion in achieving one's ends, while violence involves the intention to harm or injure. Thus, it is quite possible to be aggressive without being violent. A player can be both forceful and vigorous without seeking to injure or harm anyone. Violence, however, is centrally to do with intentional harm or injury to others, as well as attempts to harm, recklessness as to harm, and negligence. All team sports recognize this simple distinction, and so have developed rules against violence but not (of course) against aggression. Most team sports just are exercises in controlled aggression.

Take the example of boxing again, which seems to license violence. Certainly, it permits aggressive assaults and attempts to hurt. But hurt is not harm. If the boxer aims to hurt but not to cause lasting harm or injury, then he is not being 'violent' in the sense that warfare is. A further distinction will help us here, between violent acts and acts of violence. Any action (e.g., kill-

ing or kissing someone) can be done more or less violently. So boxing, along with most sports, is violent in the sense that it consists of many violent acts – i.e. actions performed violently (vigorously). However, an act of violence is one that intends harm or injury, whether or not it is actually performed violently (and there are many ways of doing harm gently). Boxing as a sport, while employing violent actions, should not permit acts of violence – it should not be about trying to, or having to, put the opponent in hospital in order to win. (This is the moral objection to some forms of gladiatorial boxing, such as prize-fighting.)

Nevertheless, it might well be objected that what is wrong with competitive sport is that it encourages aggression and seeing the other as an opponent, an enemy. However, I would rather suggest that aggression in sport presents opportunities for moral education and moral development. When playing sport we exercise our potential for aggression, and we may also be tempted by the attractions of violence in pursuit of our aims. I have argued elsewhere that sport and games can function as laboratories for value experiments, in which we are 'put in the position of having to act, time and time again, sometimes in haste, under pressure or provocation, either to prevent something or to achieve something, under a structure of rules.'

I believe that the impetus and opportunity for values education here is tremendous. The questions are: how do we come to terms with our own behaviour and dispositions, motivations and propensities? Is there a route from the potentially risky confrontation that sport sometimes is, to the development of a self with greater moral resolution? And, more generally, is there a possibility for peace and the non-violent conduct of human affairs?

So the claim is that the competitive sports situation challenges individuals to develop and use their power and aggressiveness;

but not, finally, to use this power to control and subjugate the other. Sport may produce more assertive and aggressive people, but less violent people, as it acts in society as an agent of moral change.

### 3. *Intrinsic values*

The third mistake is to think that, because sport can be used in the service of different values, it has no values of its own. For example, Sugden flatly asserts: '... it is my considered view that in and of itself sport is of no intrinsic value'. Instead, he thinks, the values are inserted into it by contextual social forces. However, consider these different claims:

- (i) sport may be used instrumentally in the service of different values;
- (ii) sport may or may not be played morally;
- (iii) sport is without values of its own (without 'intrinsic' value).

My view is that neither (i) nor (ii), even if true, entails (iii). I think that there is something special about sport in virtue of which it is an excellent tool for peace.

The moral that these writers wish to draw is that it is all in the method – it is how we teach sport that is important, not what we teach. Now, of course method is extremely important, but it's not everything. If methods were all, and sport had no intrinsic value, why are not those methods being employed in 'basket-weaving for peace', instead of football? Now, I'm not against basket-weaving, which could be very useful, but I think that sport is more so – and not simply because of its popularity (see below), but because of its ethical basis. In fact, its very popularity is also to be explained with reference to its intrinsically moral

nature.

This is a very old argument. Bailey argued against the traditional view that games provide a secure avenue to value education – that games are in themselves character building. His view that it is possible to play games effectively either morally or not is surely incontrovertible – see (ii) above. Aspin's counter-arguments that the constitutive rules of games enshrine moral values, and that games are collaborative enterprises which ipso facto entail that sport offers opportunities for learning about values seem equally sound – see (iii) above. It seems to me that everyone is right here – since (ii) does not entail (iii). Games are, in part, constructed out of values, but this does not guarantee that they will be played morally. So I am with Meakin: games provide opportunities for the presentation of values. But they are only capable of presenting these opportunities because they themselves have intrinsic values.

### **Why use sport?**

So sport is not about conflict but competition; not about violence but controlled aggression; neither is it amoral and value-free but is itself a moral enterprise. Only for those who think differently (those who make one of the above three mistakes) does the question arise: why would sport be used? If sport has bad values (violence and conflict) or if it has no values of its own, why is it that peace activists seek to use sport (and not something else) in the service of their aims? We need an account of sport that will explain its nature, its potential social roles and its popularity.

## **Fair play and the logic of sport**

### ***The moral concept of fair play***

Fair play is fundamental to the whole enterprise of sport and to an understanding of sport as a social practice. It is partly a moral and partly a logical notion referring to a complex set of features emerging from principled engagement in competitive sporting activity, and three related moral meanings are often distinguished as follows:

- (i) Fair play is often seen as primarily a virtue of rule-adherence, which is a duty upon all contestants to abide by the rules of the competition;
- (ii) But fair play may also include a commitment to contesting in 'the spirit of sport', such as may lead to supererogatory actions (i.e., good actions over and above those strictly required by the rules).
- (iii) And fair play may also sometimes refer to a general attitude towards sport (and even life itself) involving respect for others, modesty in victory, serenity in defeat and generosity aimed at creating warm and lasting human relations.

### ***Fair play as a logical requirement***

However, it often goes unnoticed that the primary nature of fair play in sport is not as a moral requirement – as rule-adherence, acknowledgement of the spirit of sport, or trying to be a fair-minded person in general. Rather, its main significance is as a logically necessary feature of successful engagement.

To freely choose to be accepted into a community of practice entails an obligation to duly respect the rules of the practice (or institution) as its lawful authority. To subvert such a contract to contest threatens the moral basis of sport, jeopardizes the

integrity of the sporting community and erodes public support and trust. It is because it is impossible to get a game of football going, or keep a competition going, unless the participants have some grasp on these notions, that sport is an excellent vehicle for the introduction and maintenance of moral and political values. Freedom, responsibility, equality, justice and respect – all these are to be found in the rule-based practices of sport.

The idea of 'sport isomorphism' is that the structures and values of sport echo those of political liberalism. So, sport is a metaphor for (or a lived experiment in) those values: freedom, responsibility, equality, justice, respect, etc. The role of the liberal state is to hold the ring – that is to enforce the values of thin liberalism so as to provide a set of 'neutral' conditions of order and the rule of law so that negotiations can proceed between conflicting and competing interests without political violence. Isomorphically, the role of the referee is to enforce the rules so as to provide an equal playing-field so that the mutual contesting of skills between competitors can proceed without violence. It is a salient fact that no liberal democracy has ever declared war on another. The promotion of the values of liberal democracy is itself a peacemaking and peacekeeping strategy. And so, to identify, recognize and promote the intrinsic values of sport, which are isomorphic with the values of liberal democracy, is to provide a vehicle for peacemaking and peacekeeping that, far from being value-free, is crafted for the purpose.

I hope to have demonstrated that the requirements upon us to play fairly are not simply requirements to play morally. They are also requirements to acknowledge the internal logic of the practices we call sports, without which participation is just impossible. A further suggestion is that this internal logic is founded on values that are isomorphic with political liberalism, including the

ideas of social contract, equality before the law, justice, toleration and mutual respect.

### Conclusion – sport's peacekeeping 'potential'

Of course, sport is not a cure-all, and if sport programmes can be useful in peace-building, then they must be implemented as part of a wider set of peace-building strategies. I have tried to argue that the very nature of sport lends itself to the task of interpersonal understanding and respect, and that the nature of cooperative striving in rule-governed competition can lead towards civilized and peaceful resolutions. I have claimed that it is this peacemaking capacity of sport that informs its peacekeeping potential.

Potentials, however, are not always realized. Of course, it is possible to exploit and manipulate a social institution towards vested interests. In the case of sport, for example, this is what the amateurism/professionalism debate is all about: whether the external interests of business and profiteering have changed the very nature of sport; or whether they have perverted the nature of sport; or whether their aims are inimical to sport. Or take marriage, as another example of a social institution. The ceremony (which might vary considerably according to context) announces certain values and draws certain promises. It thereby has the potential for principled partnerships. But of course, no one claims that marriage cannot be used for other purposes: to seal the friendship of kings, to secure access to a family's wealth, to gain citizenship, to display a trophy wife, etc. And of course, no one claims that because people sometimes have these external interests, it follows that marriage has no intrinsic values.

Similarly, sport can be used to earn money, promote a nation, inflate egos, bully the weak, vaunt victory, disparage the loser and

so on. But this does not mean that sport has no (intrinsic) values. To argue that sport has peacemaking capacity and peacekeeping potential is to argue that it has a certain intrinsic form and intrinsic values, which lend themselves to those tasks. This is why sport is promoted (instrumentally) by peacekeepers, even if they do not particularly like sport themselves. A shallow appreciation of sport would see its popularity. A deeper understanding of sport would try to explain why it is universally popular – as a mode of mutual expression of our common humanity. Only if we can give some account of the nature and intrinsic values of sport will we be in a position to identify and promote those values which are the bedrock of its peacekeeping potential.



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