

The Philosophy of Physical Education and Sport from Ancient Times to the Enlightenment

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As an academic discipline, the philosophy of sport has been in existence for a relatively short period. Although the philosophy of sport as an academic endeavour is relatively young, the philosophical view of sport itself is not new. Although sport was a major activity according to the Greeks and Romans, it lost its importance during the Middle Ages. After the Renaissance, education came to be seen as a necessity. With its incorporation and utilisation in the educational curriculum, physical education obviously became more common in the curricula of the Renaissance and Reformation than it had been in the Middle Ages. Opinions about the sport of ancient times have influenced those of the modern era. The aim of this study is to examine the evolution of physical training from the renaissance to enlightenment, which is important because this period has laid the foundations of modern physical training and sport perception. In this study, the literature is reviewed from ancient times to the enlightenment, and the revolutions and developments that have occurred are emphasised.

Key words: ancient time, renaissance, physical education, sport

Introduction

Movement was seen as an obligatory life activity among humans during primitive ages who viewed movement as lively activity (Alpman, 1972). The need to be constantly prepared for the certainty of life's struggle gave humans a rare physical fitness, which involved nerve and muscle (Gillet, 1975). At this point, sport emerged out of the exercises and competitions that athletes used to prepare their bodies and minds for war, and this played a major role in development of the role of sport in development of sport cultures (Ongel, 2000).

Although the ancient Greeks strove to ensure that Olympian athletes were able to perform at their peak, equal importance was placed on critically examining the nature, purpose and value of sport and physical activity in Greek life (Hardman and Jones, 2010). In the ancient world, the greatest success an athlete could achieve was to win the Olympiad crown. The Olympic Games were held every four years for a thousand years from 776 B.C until 393 A.D. in honour of Zeus. The traditional date of the founding of the Olympic Games is 776 B.C., but its unofficial beginning dates back farther. In the basic games, although the rewards were symbolic, the champions' own cities held ostentatious display marches during the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. and provided accommodation, food facilities and theatre seats as well as generous cash rewards (Swaddling, 2000). In ancient Greece, the Hera Games were organised for women and took place every four years (Pfister, 2000); only young girls, not married women, were allowed to participate in these competitions (Spears, 1984).

In Ancient time (500-300 B.C.), winners were seen as special people in the period when feasts were made for the purpose of worshipping gods. All sport-centred activities were launched to end the religious civil wars that were taking place (Er et al., 2005). The Athens school system was based on physical training and mainly involved music and various sporting activities; these were aimed at developing the physical, mental and moral attributes of the citizens of the city-state. Thus, a physical training system, gymnastics, emerged for the first time (Yildiran, 2005).

During the Hellenic Age (336-30 B.C.), when a healthy perception of life developed, education (in which physical training played an important role) gained importance. Sports were considered “physical training for health”, and agonal (competitive) gymnastics were also highly regarded. Whereas competitive gymnastics remained the preserve of athletes, competitions in holy games also returned to round up the list of competitions (Yildiran, 2005). Unlike other Greek civilisations, Spartan woman were trained and educated physically (Bandy, 2000).

For Romans, some body movements served the purpose as preparation for war and the military. Roman youth received physical training as war exercises. Activities suitable for Romans’ war ambitions were used to create their ideal human type: a strong, hugely muscled foursquare man (*Homo quadratos*) (Alpman, 1972). The Olympic Games were banned by Emperor Theodosius I in 393-4 A.D. Another dimension of the sporting lives of Romans was their penchant for spectator-orientated activities, epitomised as chariot racing at the circuses and gladiatorial battles in the amphitheatres (Phillips and Roper, 2006).

The education system was also characterised as “scholastic”, like the thought system of the Middle Ages, which lasted approximately from 476 A.D. until the 1500s (Aytaç, 1980). During this age when faith replaced reason, the only educator was the church (Binbaşıoğlu, 1982). As the radical social changes of chivalry emerged later, during the High Middle Age (1000-1300 A.D.), the military functions of chivalry rejected caring about the body, and hostility against the body developed (Yildiran, 2005). During the Middle Ages, women were excluded, and physical activities were carried out in the name of recreation, not sport (Memiş & Yildiran, 2011).

The ancient educational system was imitated during the Renaissance, and in the 15th and 16th centuries, school physical training began again. Hieronymus Mercurialis, an Italian humanist, wrote “*De Arte Gymnastica*” by gathering information related to Greek gymnastic culture from old Greek and Roman sources just as in 16th century, when scholars had differentiated Ancient Greek gymnastics into forms pertaining to health, paramilitary training and athletic/competition; in this work, gymnastic practices were again categorized according to various periods and thought systems (Yildiran, 2005). Reform pedagogues of the age of enlightenment, philanthropists such as Basedow, Salzmann, GutsMuths etc. laid the scientific foundations of modern physical training during the 18th century and heavily influenced the intellectuals of the next century deeply (Yildiran, 2005). The aim of this study is to examine the “Evolution of Physical Training from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment”, which is important because the foundations of current physical training and sport perceptions are based on this concept.

An Overview from the Ancient Age to the Renaissance

The Greek educational ideal which emerged during the 8th – 6th centuries B.C. aimed at developing general fitness via “gymnastics” and the “music” of the body; that is, the development of body and spirit in a harmonic body and, in this way, providing a beautiful body, mental development and spiritual and moral hygiene. These are expressed by the word *Kalokagathia*, meaning both beautiful and good, based on the words “*Kalos*” and “*Agathos*” (Aytaç, 1980; Alpman, 1972). Thus, the use of physical training and sport as the most suitable means as discussed first in Ancient Greece (Yildiran, 2005). To achieve the ideal of *kalokagathia*, three conditions were required: nobility, correct behaviour and careful teaching (Yildiran, 2011). Physical beauty (*kalos*) did not refer just to external appearance; it also referred to mental health. Humans who had these qualifications were considered ideal humans (*kalokagathos*) (Bohus, 1986). The idea of the *Kalokagathia* ideal, which was developed during the

early classical age, had seen archaic-aristocratic high value “*arete*”s thinned and deepened (Popplow, 1972).

The vital point of aristocratic culture was physical training; in a sense, it was sport. The children were prepared for various sport competitions under the supervision of a *paidotribes* (a physical education teacher) and learned horse riding, discus and javelin throwing, long jumping, wrestling and boxing. The aim of the sport was to develop and strengthen the body, and hence, the character (Durusken, 2001).

In Ancient Greece, boys attended wrestling schools because it was believed that playing sports beautified the human spirit as well as the body (Balci, 2008). The palaestra was a special building within ancient gymnasiums where wrestling and physical training were practiced (Saltuk, 1990). The education practiced in this era covered gymnastic training and music education, and its aim was to develop a heroic mentality, but only for royalty. With this goal in mind, education aimed to discipline the body, raising an agile warrior by developing a cheerful and brave spirit (Aytac, 1980).

The feasts which were held to worship the gods in Ancient Greece began for the purpose of ending civil wars. All sport-centred activities were of religious character. As the ancient Olympic Games were of religious origin, they were conducted in Olympia. Over time, running distances increased, new and different games were added to the schedule, soldiers began to use armour in warfare, art and philosophy were understood better and great interest was shown in the Olympic Games; therefore, the program was enriched and changed, and the competitions were increased from one to five days (Er et al., 2005). However, the active or passive attendance of married women was banned at the ancient Olympic Games for religious reasons (Memis and Yildiran, 2011). The Olympic Games had an important function as one of the elements aimed at uniting the ancient Greeks culturally, but this ended when the games were banned by Emperor Theodosius 1st in 393-4 A.D. (Balci, 2008).

Sparta, which is located in the present-day Mora peninsula, was an agricultural state that had been formed by the immigration of Dors from the 8th century B.C. Spartan education provided an extremely paternalistic education, which sought the complete submergence of the individual in the citizen and provided him with the attributes of courage, complete obedience and physical perfection (Cordasco, 1976). In Sparta, where the foundations of social order constituted iron discipline, military proficiency, strictness and absolute obedience, the peaceful stages of life had the character of a “preparation for the war school” (Aytac, 1980). The essential thing that made Hellenic culture important was its gaining new dimensions with distinctive creative power regarding cultural factors that this culture had adopted from the ancient east, and its revealing of the concept of the “perfect human” (Iplikcioglu, 1997).

Children stayed with their family until they were seven years old; from this age, they were assigned to the state-operated training institutes where they were trained strictly in war and state tasks. Strengthening the body and preparing for war took a foremost place in accordance with the military character of the state. Girls were also given a strict military training (Aytac, 1980). The same training given to the boys was also given to the girls. The most prominent example of this is the girls and boys doing gymnastics together (Russel, 1969). Although physical training and music education were included, reading, writing and arithmetic were barely included in Spartan education (Binbasioglu, 1982).

Unlike Sparta, the classical period of Athenian democracy (Athens had advanced trade and industry) included the Persian Wars and Peloponnese Wars, and Cleisthenes’ democratic reforms and the ending of sea domination in domestic policy. As this democracy covered “the independent layer”, it took the form of an “aristocratic democracy” (Aytac, 1980).

Learning was given great importance in the Athenian democracy. The sons of independent citizens received education in grammar and at home or private school. Music education and gymnastic training were carried out in “Gymnasiums” and “Palestrae”, which were built and controlled by the state; running areas were called “Dramos”, and chariot race areas were termed “Hippodromes” (Aytac, 1980). Children older than 12 years started receiving sports training and music education in Athens, where the military training was barely included. Athenians insisted on the aesthetical and emotional

aspects of education. Therefore, the best art works of the ancient world were created in this country (Binbasioglu, 1982).

As in the 5th century B.C., Greek education was unable to appropriately respond to new developments; Sophists emphasised the development of traditional education in terms of language and rhetoric in an attempt to overcome the crisis. Sophists provided education in the morals, law, and the natural sciences in addition to the trivium, grammar, rhetoric, dialectic) (Aytac, 1980). Greeks considered physical training prudent and important because it developed the body and organised games conducive to the gathering of large crowds; in these games, all regions of Greece were represented (Balci, 2008).

Rome constitutes the second most important civilisation of the Ancient age. In Rome, the family played the strongest role in education, and the state did not have much say or importance. While exercise constituted the means of education in Ancient Rome, the purpose of this education was “to raise a good citizen”, such that each person had a skilled, righteous and steady character. Physical training was provided in addition to courses such as mythology, history, geography, jurisprudence, arithmetic, geometry and philosophy; this training was provided in Grammar schools, where basic teaching covered the “Seven free arts” (Aytac, 1980).

Due to the Scholastic structure of the Middle Ages, values respecting the human were forgotten. However, the “Renaissance” movement, which started in Europe and whose ideas inform the modern world, developed many theories related to education and physical training and attempted to apply this in various ways; the development of these ideas was continued in “The Age of Enlightenment”.

The Renaissance

General Aspects of the Renaissance

The word renaissance means “rebirth”; in this period, artists and philosophers tried to discover and learn the standards of Ancient Rome and Athens (Perry et al., 1989). In the main, the Renaissance represented a protest of individualism against authority in the intellectual and social aspects of life (Singer, 1960).

Renaissance reminded “Beauty” lovers of the development of a new art and imagination. From the perspective of a scientist, the Renaissance represented innovation in ancient sciences, and from the perspective of a jurist, it was a light shining over the shambles of old traditions. Human beings found their individuality again during this era, in which they tried to understand the basics of nature and developed a sense of justice and logic. However, the real meaning of “renaissance” was to be decent and kind to nature (Michelet, 1996).

The Renaissance was shaped in Italy beginning from the 1350s as a modern idea contradicting the Middle Ages. The creation of a movement for returning to the old age with the formidable memories of Rome naturally seemed plausible (Mcneill, 1985). New ideas that flourished in the world of Middle Age art and developed via various factors did not just arise by accident; incidents and thoughts that developed in a social context supported it strongly (Turani, 2003). Having reached its climax approximately in the 1500s, the Italian Renaissance constituted the peak of the Renaissance; Leonardo da Vinci observed the outside world, people and objects captiously via his art and Niccolo Machiavelli’s drastically analysed nature and use of politics through his personal experiences and a survey of classical writers (Mcneill, 1985).

The Concept of Education and Approaches to Physical Training during the Renaissance

The humanist education model, which was concordant with the epitomes of the Renaissance, was a miscellaneous, creative idea. Its goal was to create an all-round advanced human being, “homo universale”. At the same time, such an educational epitome necessarily gained an aristocratic character. This educational epitome no longer provided education to students at school (Aytac, 1980).

In 14th century, the “*humanist life epitome*” was claimed. The humanism movement was gradually developing and spreading; however, in this phase, humanism-based formation or practice was not in question.

In the history of humanity, the humanism period has been acknowledged as a ‘transitional period’. Modern civilisation and education is based on this period. Philosophers, such as Erasmus, Rabelais, Montaigne and Luther, flourished during this period. Universities began to multiply, and latitudinarianism was created. Scholastic thought was shaken from its foundations at the beginning of this period via the influence of Roger Bacon, who lived during the 13th Century. Original forms of works constituting the culture of Ancient Athens and Rome were found, read, and recreated concordantly; moreover, the ideas of latitudinarian, old educators such as Quintilianus were practiced. In teaching methods, formulae enabling pupils to improve their skills and abilities were adopted. Students started to learn outdoors, in touch with nature. Strict disciplinary methods gave way to rather tolerant methods. The importance and value of professional education were acknowledged (Binbasioglu, 1982). Positive sciences, such as history, geography and natural history were not given a place in the classroom for a long time, but Latin preserved its place until recent times (Aytac, 1980).

With Desiderius von Erasmus, who was alive during the height of European humanism, humanism adopted its first scientific principle: “Return to sources!”; for this reason, the works of ancient writers were published. Erasmus’ educational epitome consists of a humanist-scientific formulation; however, it does not externalise the moral-religious lifestyle. Having worked to expand humanity into higher levels, Erasmus summarises the conditions for this quest as follows: good teachers, a useful curriculum, good pedagogical methods, and paying attention to personal differences among pupils. With these ideas, Erasmus represents the height of German humanist pedagogy (Aytac, 1980).

On the other hand, Martin Luther considered universities as institutions where “*all kinds of iniquity took place, there was little faith to sacred values, and the profane master Aristotle was taught imprudently*” and he demanded that schools and especially universities be inspected. Luther thought that schools and universities should teach religiously inclined youth in a manner heavily dependent on the Christian religion (Aytac, 1980). Alongside these ideas, Luther made statements about the benefits of chivalric games and training, and of wrestling and jumping to health, which, in his opinion, could make the body more fit (Alpman, 1972).

The French philosopher Michel de Montaigne, known for his “*Essays*”, was a lover of literature who avoided any kind of extreme and was determined, careful and balanced. In his opinion, the aim of education was to transfer “ethical and scientific knowledge via experiments” to pupils. De Montaigne believed that a person’s skills and abilities in education, which can be called natural powers, are more important than or even superior to logic and society (Binbasioglu, 1982).

The Humanist movement has played a very significant role in educational issues. This movement flourished in order to resurrect the art and culture of ancient Athens and Rome with their formidable aspects, thereby enabling body and soul to improve concordantly with the education of humans (Alpman, 1972). Humanism was not a philosophical system but a cultural and educational program (Kristeller, 1961).

The necessity of physical training along with education of soul and mind has been emphasised; for this reason, physical practices and games have been suggested for young people. It is possible to see how the humanists formed the foundations of the Renaissance, beginning from the 14th century to the 18th century and working from Italy to Spain, Germany, France and England. Almost all of the humanists stated the significance of physical training in their written works on education (Alpman, 1972).

One of the humanists, Vittorino da Feltre may have viewed it as the most pleasant goal of his life to raise a group of teenagers and fed and educated poor but talented children at his home (Burckhardt, 1974). Feltre practiced a classical education in his school called “Joyful Residence”. In accord with Ancient Greek education concepts, he claimed that benefits were provided by the education of body and soul through daily exercises such as swimming, riding and swordplay, and generating love

towards nature via hiking; he also emphasised the importance of games and tournaments (Alpman, 1972; Aytac, 1980).

Enea Silvio de Piccolomini is also worthy of attention; alongside his religious character, he thought that physical training should be emphasised and that beauty and power should be improved in this way (Alpman, 1972). de Piccolomini attracted attention to the importance of education as a basis for body and soul while stressing the importance of avoiding things that cause laxity, games and resting (Aytac, 1980).

Juan Ludwig Vives, a systematic philosopher who had multiple influences, in one of his most significant works “*De Tradendis Disciplinis*”, which was published in 1531, advised such practices as competitive ball playing, hiking, jogging, wrestling and braggartism, beginning from the age of 15 (Alpman, 1972).

The German humanist Joachim Camerarius, who managed the academic gymnasium in the city of Nürnberg, is also very important in relation to this subject. Having practicing systematic physical training at the school in which he worked, Camerarius wrote his work, “*Dialogus de Cymnasis*”, which refers to the pedagogical and ethical values of Greek gymnastics. In this work, he stressed such practices as climbing, jogging, wrestling, swordplay, jumping, stone throwing and games that were practiced by specially selected children according to their ages and physical abilities, all under the supervision of experienced teachers (Alpman, 1972).

The Italian Hieronymus Mercurialis’ *De Arte Gymnastica*, first published in Latin in Venice in 1569, contained very little on the Olympic Games. Indeed, the author was hostile to the idea of competitive athletics. The Frenchman Petrus Faber’s *Agonisticon* (1592), in its 360 pages of Latin text, brought together in one place many ancient texts concerning the Olympics but was disorganised, repetitive and often unclear (Lee, 2003). The first part of the *De Arte Gymnastica* included the definition of Ancient Greek gymnastics and an explanation of actual terminology whereas the second part contained precautions about the potential harms of exercises practiced in the absence of a doctor. Moreover, he separated gymnastics practised for health reasons from military gymnastics (Alpman, 1972).

The Transition to the Age of Enlightenment: Reformation, Counter-reformation and the Age of Method

The Age of Reformation: The most significant feature of European cultural life during this age was the dominant role played by religious issues, unlike the Renaissance in Italy (Mcneill, 1985). This age symbolises the uprising of less civilised societies against logic-dominated Italy (Russell, 2002). Bearing a different character from Renaissance and Humanism, the Reformation did not stress improvements in modern art or science, but rather improvements in politics and the Church; consonant with this, its education epitome emphasised being religious and dependent on the Church. Nevertheless, both Humanism and the Reformation struggled against Middle Ages scholasticism, and both appreciated the value of human beings (Aytac, 1980).

The Counter-reformation Movement: In this period, which includes the movement of the Catholic church to retake privileges that it had lost due to the Reformation, the “Jesuit Sect” was founded to preach, confess and collect “perverted minds” once again under the roof of the Catholic church via teaching activities (Aytac, 1980).

The Age of Method: Also known as the Age of Practice, this period saw efforts to save people from prejudice, and principles for religion, ethics, law and state were sought to provide systematic knowledge in a logic-based construction. Aesthetic educational approaches, which were ignored by religion and the Church because of the attitudes prevailing during the Reformation and Counter-reformation, were given fresh emphasis. Bacon, Locke, Ratke, Komensky, Descartes and Comenius are among the famous philosophers who lived during this period (Aytac, 1980).

The Age of Enlightenment

General Features and Educational Concepts of the Enlightenment

The Enlightenment Period had made itself clear approximately between 1680 and 1770 or even 1780. Science developed into separate disciplines, literature became an independent subject, and it was demanded that history also become independent (Chaunu, 2000).

During this period, educators transformed the concept of education from preparing students for the afterlife into preparing them for the world around them, so that they could be free and enlightened. Moreover, educators of the period were usually optimistic and stressed the importance of study and work. At school, students were educated in such a way as to engrain a love of nature and human beings. Based on these ideas, learning was undertaken by experiment and experience (Binbasioglu, 1982).

William Shakespeare mentioned the concept of “Fair Play” and the ideas of “maintain equality of opportunity” and “show the cavalier style of thinking” at the end of the 16th century; by the 18th century, these ideas were included in sport (Gillmeister, 1988). Systematic changes in the foundations of the principles of fair play that occurred in the 19th century were directly related to the socio-cultural structure of Victorian England (Yildiran, 1992).

The Concept of Physical Training during the Enlightenment and Its Pioneers

Ideas and epitomes produced prior to this period were ultimately practiced in this period. Respected educators of the period stressed the significance of physical training, which appealed only to the aristocracy during the Renaissance; simulating the education system of the Ancient Age, educators started to address everyone from all classes and their views spread concordantly in this period.

John Locke: The Enlightenment reached maturity during the mid-to late eighteenth century. John Locke lead player in this new intellectual movement (Faiella, 2006), was most likely the most popular political philosopher during the first part of the 18th century, who stressed the necessity of education (Perry et al., 1989). Locke’s “Essay on Human Intellect” is acknowledged as his most prominent and popular work (Russell, 2002). His work, “Notions of Education” stressed the importance of child health, advised children to learn swimming and to maintain their fitness. Moreover, Locke noted that such activities as dance, swordplay and riding were essential for a gentleman (Alpman, 1972) and that education should be infused with game play (Binbaşıoğlu, 1982).

Jean Jacques Rousseau: in his work, *Emile*, the philosopher from Geneva discussed educational matters in regard to the principles of nature (Russell, 2002). In this work, which he wrote in (1762) Rousseau argued that individuals should learn from nature, human beings or objects (Perry et al., 1989), and expressed his notions concerning the education of children and teenagers (Binbasioglu, 1982). Rousseau held that children should be allowed to develop and learn according to their natural inclinations, but in *Emile*, this goal was achieved by a tutor who cunningly manipulated his pupil’s responses (Damrosch, 2007). The aforesaid education was termed “Natural education” of the public or “education which will create natural human beings” (Aytaç, 1980). *Emile* exercised early in the morning because he needed strength, and because a strong body was the basic requirement for a healthy soul. Running with bare feet, high jumping, and climbing walls and trees, *Emile* mastered such skills as jogging, swimming, stone throwing, archery and ball games. Rousseau demanded that every school would have a gymnasium or an area for training (Alpman, 1972).

Philanthropists and Philanthropinums

Before Pestalozzi organised his schools, there was a very important and influential movement in Germany to carry out some of the practical reforms in teaching methods that had been suggested in Rousseau’s *Emile*. Those reforms were successfully realised in certain experimental schools, one of which (Salzmann’s) continued in operation for over a century (Parker, 1912). Philanthropists who have

contributed to the development of educational science have as their ideal the provision of enlightened education for citizens, and the world and life were considered in their perspective of serving a certain, beneficial practice. The movement started from uniting “general features” rather than characterising features that separated people. Education should emphasise the practical enlightenment of human beings. Supporters of this movement called themselves “Philanthropists” (lovers of man) who in their opinion, not only should theoretical information be given in lessons, but students should also visit ateliers and have the chance to travel and go on tours. These supporters emphasised the regulation of classes in such a way as to provide students with “pleasure and joy” ideas of and contributed considerably to the improvement of “game play” and “sports” in education, accordingly (Aytac, 1980).

Johann Bernhard Basedow and the Dessau Philanthropinum: Basedow, who was born in Hamburg in 1724, thought that decency and the security of the state was proportionate to the happiness of the public and that the safest way to achieve this was through education (Aytac, 1980). Basedow aimed at the education of the human being as a whole. He emphasised practical knowledge over intellectual training and athletics, and attacked the rigid distinction between “work” and “play” by insisting on frequent breaks; he also suggested teaching languages not by rote memorisation but as a kind of game. Students were to be educated to become independent citizens who could take care of themselves in their future lives (Kuehn, 2001). Acknowledged as the pioneer of the “Philanthropy” movement, in accord with the example provided by Ancient Greece, the “Dessau Pentathlon”, which was regulated by Basedow, consisted of a quintet of exercises: jogging, jumping, climbing, balance and carrying exercises; this was completed complemented by ball-playing games, and ring and shot rolling. Emphasising such studies as carpentry and gardening, this school founded modern gymnastics (Alpman, 1972).

Christian Gotthilf Salzmann and Schnepfenthal Philanthropinum: Salzmann’s school, which was founded in 1784 at Schnepfenthal farm, developed over a short time and continues to exist today (Alpman, 1972; Aytac, 1980). Constructed away from the city and presenting a family ambiance, this school became immediately popular because students were given equal rights; this school adopted the programs of the Dessau school and provided expanded gymnastics programs (Alpman, 1972). At this school, physical education, nature study, school gardening, and geographical and other excursions, etc. were organised more effectively than in any other school since that time (Parker, 1912).

Johann Christian Friedrich GutsMuths: Having been born in Quedlinburg, GutsMuths (1759-1839) attended Salzmann’s school and continued his education there. After advancing his experience in gymnastics, he completely took over the entire class and improved gymnastics by turning it into a system (Alpman, 1972). He based the theory of gymnastics on physiological factors and pointed to the benefits of gymnastics for body and soul from a national and aesthetic perspective. Stating that the aim of gymnastics was to provide a balanced relation between soul, mind and body, GutsMuths had very important ideas about games (Capan, 1999).

The Concept of Gymnastics and the Individuals who Contributed towards it during the 19th Century

Gymnastics was put on a scientific basis by GutsMuths and Vieth in Germany and gained a methodical approach based on Pestalozzi’s efforts in Switzerland. Jahn, who presented gymnastics to the public by separating it from the parochial of educational institutions, has been acknowledged as the father of gymnastics (Turnvater). Amoros, however, who acted in accord with the basics espoused by Pestalozzi, was influenced by Jahn and overemphasised militaristic gymnastics, separating gymnastics practices into various disciplines (Alpman, 1972: 166,178).

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi: Pestalozzi defined education as “the natural, progressive, harmonious development of all the powers and faculties of the human being” (Monroe, 1912). Bringing a new concept to gymnastics education, Pestalozzi discusses “Natural Gymnastics”, following an order that is

concordant with child development. Believing that skilful, experienced, brash and successful youth could only develop on the game field, not in schools, Pestalozzi tried the “Stepping Principle” which is a method of systematically practicing known and trusted movements (Capan, 1999).

Gerhard Ulrich Anton Vieth: One of the people who helped to provide gymnastics with a scientific aspect, Vieth discussed the effects of exercise on the body and soul (Alpman, 1972).

Friedrich Ludwig Jahn: Known as the pioneer of gymnastics in Germany, Jahn benefited dramatically from the opinions of Basedow and GutsMuths (Capan, 1999). Jahn developed the use of apparatus in gymnastics, such as parallel bars, the chinning bar, horse and rings. Jahn’s goal was to develop generations of students who had body strength, who could give their lives for their country, swim well, use a sword, jump, jog and wrestle. In Jahn’s opinion, gymnastics could only be performed outdoors in the presence of the community; therefore, even the smallest settlements should have an area set aside for gymnastics (Acet, 1999).

Pehr Henrik Ling: An early form of gymnastics was invented by Per Henrik Ling, the father of Swedish gymnastics, and this was later developed by his son, Hjalmar Ling. Part of the Ling system, termed pedagogical gymnastics, consisted of “daily gymnastic training exercises”, which showed how gymnastics should be taught and performed (Mecbach, 2003). Ling observed the social and economic structure of his country and generated a new system based on science and physiology. Its aim was to give harmony and concord to the body, and the system was not intended to have any effect other than its curative effect (Capan, 1999: 48). Accordingly, Ling’s system is quite different from common gymnastics and requires no apparatus at all; the effect of these exercises is so important upon the mind and body that it may be worth noting their advantages to counteract prejudices that have hitherto opposed the general introduction of this system into schools, colleges, universities and military establishments (Rothstein, 1853). In this system, participants begin with easy exercises before advancing to more challenging ones; the exercises are practiced very slowly in order to enable the muscles to stretch to their utmost. In his work, “Basics of Gymnastics”, Ling discussed the human organism, pedagogy, the military, and the functions of gymnastics (including teachers and tools) (Acet, 1999).

Modern “Reformist Education Movements”

Germany constitutes the hometown of reformist education movements during 1900-1933. Modern “reformist education movements” always aimed at changing current education radically based on their world vision, aims, content and methods (Aytac, 1976).

The term “Reformist education movements” is covered by concepts such as “Educational reform movements”, “Reform movements in education” or “School reform movements” in the pedagogical literature. The meaning covered is as follows: changes in the basis of social policy and philosophy of culture that put forward new demands in education for different purposes; various reform manifestations that are willing to directly change education in various fields of social and cultural life; teaching didactic-directed reform applications aimed at changing schools through reforming their internal and external structure since the end of the 19th century (Aytac, 1976).

The “Child-initiated” movement left its mark at the beginning and during the first period (1900-1914) of modern educational reform movements. According to this movement, children are not small adults but are different in both mental and physical development and are individuals. A consistent principle of the child-initiated movement is “abandon to grow” (Aytac, 1976).

“Rural Education Dormitories”, which emerged with an enormous power in the last quarter of 19th century, were intended as community housing in accordance with youth structure and for the development of a lifestyle that suited the young. Therefore, education with the meaning of providing

character was brought to the forefront while gaining knowledge was relegated to secondary importance (Aytac, 1976).

Conclusion

The requirement for a movement that began with necessary life activities gave way to an individually qualified race to reach “the best and the most virtuous” with the Greeks. The Olympic Games, which were played to earn moral success and honour, were among the most important organisations of its time. Just as a school system based on physical education emerged in the Ancient Age, and just as a health-oriented physical education mentality became dominant in the Hellenistic Age, during which agonal gymnastics took a backseat, it was possible to discuss body movements performed for the purposes of preparation for war and military service during the Roman Era.

Just as physical education pertained to chivalry in the Middle Ages, during which body care and physical education were rejected, so too the idea of physical education was renewed in the 15th and 16th centuries with the Renaissance, meaning “rebirth”. Highly important philosophers lived and worked during the humanist period, which is accepted as a “transitional period” in the history of mankind. All of these philosophers proposed the requirement of body building for developing the soul and the ideal man based on a completely humanistic education; for this reason, they recommended body exercises and outdoor games for the young.

Ideas and ideals that had been generated prior to the Enlightenment were practiced in this era. Physical education was intended for everyone and began to proliferate, and this appealed to aristocrats only during the Renaissance period, which emulated ancient times. Philosophers belonging to that period discussed the importance of physical education and gaining that character. While opportunities existed for children to visit workplaces and travel was allowed in courses that stood out as being simply based on theory, the leaders tried to make the courses “joyful and amusing” for children by “philanthrops”; “Philanthropinums” were the cradle of gymnastics, and the Schnepfenthal Philanthropinum, which was founded at Schnepfenthal farm, has continued in existence to this day (Alpman, 1972; Aytac, 1980).

Gymnastics, based upon a scientific foundation provided by GutsMuths and Vieth in Germany, gained a methodological basis through the work of Pestalozzi in Switzerland. Jahn Iken Amaros classified gymnastic movements into various sections after having taken gymnastics from the narrow framework of educational institutions into the public domain (Alpman, 1972).

The “Child-initiated” movement, which accepted children as being different from adults in terms of their mental and physical development and considering the child as an individual, has left its mark on the beginning of modern education reform movements. “Rural Education Dormitories” placed education to the forefront in the sense of building character (Aytac, 1976).

In conclusion, Antiquity shed light on the following periods and has been a guiding light that was clearly understood from educator’s and scientist’s attempts in the next period. As the works of educators’ emphasised physical education during the Enlightenment period, so body development gained more and more importance. The Humanists who understood the importance of the antic era of gymnasium and emphasised the place of physical education as well as scientific knowledge in general education set up convenient training centres.

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