

HOME ABOUT LOG IN REGISTER SEARCH CURRENT
ARCHIVES ANNOUNCEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS




Reading Tools

What is good spor...

Pisk

Review policy
About the author
How to cite item
Indexing metadata
Print version
Notify colleague*
Finding References

Home > Vol 36, No 2 (2006) > Pisk

Font Size:   

What is good sport: Plato's view

Jernej Pisk

Abstract

One of Plato's most common questions found in his dialogues is "What is something?" By asking this question Plato usually brought his co-speakers to the recognition that in fact they do not have a full comprehension of what something is, although they have a partial comprehension of it. The awareness of one's incomplete cognition is the first step to be made on the philosophic way to truth. As in ancient times also today Plato asks us – the modern philosophers of sport – "What is sport?" or more precisely "What is good sport?" Probably the best of Plato's answers to this question can be found in the basic concepts of his philosophy regarding his hierarchical division of the state and human soul into three parts. Since sport is derived from human being also the goodness of sport can be divided into three stages. The lowest stage of sport corresponds to the first part of the soul – the appetite soul. On this stage sport is based on the gaining of material goods through prizes won at competitions. In the philosophic view, this is the lowest possible stage of goodness of sport. The second stage of sport corresponds to the second part of the soul – the emotional soul. Sport at this stage is based on the elementary ancient agon, which seeks fulfilment in the winning of honour and glory. The greatest and the most superior is the third part of the soul – the reasonable soul. According to this, also the sport corresponding to the third part of the soul is the best. For this kind of sport it is no longer necessary to compete with other contestants, since it can achieve it's fulfilment in perfect execution of movement or exercise, in which the perfect cooperation between reason (soul) and body is attained. At this stage of sport it is the most important to compete and win over one's self, and this can be achieved by everyone, without regard to his/her physical abilities in comparison with others. In Plato's view, good sport is the sport directed toward the fulfillment of self, all the way to the ideal – the idea itself. And only sport like that can bring true contentment to the human – the reasonable being. With this sport is essentially intervening in the sphere of philosophical cognition. The goodness of sport is no more determined by physical dimensions of space and time, but indeed, as Plato shows, the true good sport goes beyond these borders. In this manner sport goes beyond the physical world and touches the everlasting and unchangeable world of ideas. And the world of ideas is for Plato *tópos* where the very truth reveals itself. So, sport could be a useful means for the philosophical investigation of humans and the world.

SEARCH JOURNAL

CLOSE

* *Requires [registration](#)*

Full Text: [PDF](#)

