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**ON THE MODERNISATION OF THE CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE
SCIENCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS: ACTUAL QUOTING**

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Abstract. *Currently, assessing the general state of the science of physical culture and sports, they often say about the need for its modernization. This is justified for the very reason that it has long existed and in recent years a serious discrepancy has emerged in the interpretation of such concepts as "motor action" and "physical culture", which are basic in the sciences of physical culture and sport, and the treatment of these concepts in sciences of a broader plan, especially in philosophical anthropology, which invariably manifests a heightened interest in these phenomena.*

The idea of motor action and physical culture, based on an adequate methodology, exacerbates a person's general sense of movement and sense of his own body, and in the scientific and cognitive plan - helps to form a reliable conceptual basis for theoretical analysis and to develop an arsenal of methodological tools that enable effectively solve the problem of motor and physical training of a person. The foregoing does not mean that in carrying out the modernization of the science of physical culture and sports, one should follow the way of complete replacement of the positivist methodology by the philosophical methodology. First of all, it is about strengthening the metaphysical component within the framework of the general methodological approach.

Keywords: *methodological basis of the science of physical culture and sport; physical culture, motor action, sport as metaphysical phenomena.*

1. Many authors talk about the need to modernize the sciences of physical culture and sports. In fact, this theme is enduring, of course: any science is always focused on the progress of knowledge, in the acquisition of which it is specialized. However, the discussion of the problem in case of sciences of physical culture and sport is particularly relevant today. The fact is that long ago and in recent years especially, there has been a serious discrepancy in the conceptual interpretation of such concepts as "motor action" and "physical culture", which are basic in the sciences of physical culture and sports, and the interpretation of these concepts in sciences of a broader plan, especially in philosophical anthropology, which also invariably shows increased interest in these phenomena. The words "relevant citation",

included in the title of this article, reflect the desire of the authors to draw attention of researchers to a number of judgments in modern philosophy, which accentuate and actually raise in a new way many traditional questions about the sciences of physical culture and sport.

In these sciences, a *positivist approach* has been prevailed to this day, which is unquestionably legitimate and effective in dealing with many particular issues, but which is insufficient if it is necessary to understand these problems as a whole. What are the differences? - First of all, in the interpretation of the phenomenon of "man", which is implemented in both cases. Man is an *ordinary natural object* - such is the general cognitive attitude in natural science, positivist, anthropology. In biological anthropology, this

approach is mitigated: here man is a *living organism*. Psychological anthropology goes even further: here a person is usually understood as a dual entity - as the *unity of soul and body*. However, the positivist approach to the necessary degree is overcome only in philosophical anthropology, where a person is viewed in full scale as a *tripartite* phenomenon. - H. Plesner: "Man lives both as a soul and a body and as psycho-physiologically neutral unity of these spheres" [15, p.122]. It is quite obvious that it is precisely the philosophical consideration that corresponds to the task of providing a general, conceptual understanding of the essence of the phenomenon of "man" and its main manifestations.

It is appropriate to note that the *motor action*, as well as *the corporeality of man* (as one of the possible recoding of the phrase "physical culture") is often considered in philosophy as basic in general. - F. Nietzsche: "Belief in a body is more fundamental than faith in a soul. The phenomenon of the body is a richer, more distinct and tangible phenomenon, methodically subject to nomination in the first place, without any prejudice to its last meaning" [14, p.316]; K. Marx, F. Engels: "The first fact to be established is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature" [11, p. 19]; A. Gehlen: "On the basis of act as a starting point, it is possible to construct an overall science of man" [5, p. 161].

2. Thus, the existence of man is essentially *tripartite*. Initially it is obvious that the *motor action*, like everything that happens with a person, is also generally realized as an event open to this person *threefold*: in the sense of the body, in the sense of the environment and in the sense of Self - in the transcendental feeling, which presents the *conjugacy* of the

external and internal worlds and in which the person is given the experience of his involvement in the implementation of this *conjugacy*, his fateful involvement in the process of its implementation. Motive action is a full-scale act of human existence, and as such it should be considered. (Any other approach is a reduction, justified only in certain cognitive situations.) - M. Bakhtin: "The physical action of a person must be understood as a deed" [1, p.292]; E. Reed: "Those living movements that constitute an action are not physical movements, but subjective (personal) manifestations" [16, p.7]; M. Merlot-Ponty: "A meaningful gesture of the body in relation to the "other" and to the world opens up such opportunities, about which neither physiology nor biology even suspect" [13, p.18]; J. Gibson: "Locomotion and manipulation belong to such types of behavior that cannot be reduced to reactions. The ongoing efforts of physiologists and psychologists to make such a reduction comes to a natural end" [6, p.138]. (Every event that occurs in the world with human participation is not just a reaction, but a *reaction to a reaction*, a reflexive act, and this circumstance is revealed to a man as a process that, when trying to comprehend what is happening, takes him to the deep eternity.)

3. In order to avoid another simplification it should be noted that "subjective manifestations," as indicated by E. Reed, in particular, are always manifestations of an ongoing action in the space of *self-other* relations. - M. Bakhtin: "In everything that a person expresses himself outward (and, therefore, *for another one*) from the word to the body there is a tense interaction between *Self and the other ...*" [1, p. 320]. These are always *moral manifestations*, which, we emphasize this, are something more than just psychological phenomena.- M. Merlo-Ponty:

“The psyche grows up only around the presence of conscience, then a world appears that can be judged in terms of the psychological qualities of people” [13, p. 269]; - E. Levinas: “Ethical space is the space of existence of the human beginning” [9, p. 545]; Any attitude of a person to the world has, ultimately, a subject-subject character. A person notices, discovers his own presence in the world as his duty towards the “other” (to man, society, God, the World as a whole), and any event that occurs with the participation of man, in particular, motor action, is penetrated with this obligation. The full-scale realization of a motor action itself puts a person in front of the need to carry out an act, which in its structure, in its content, is an act of moral choice.

4. It should be noted that the orientation to the natural scientific approach as the main one does not only provide a significantly limited understanding of the motor action, which is already undesirable as such, it also, contrary to stable expectations, does not provide the subject performing the action adequately, *fully strict*, knowledge of what is happening. We are not always aware of what is really happening here. Meanwhile, for the man himself, in particular for the athlete, the motor action that he performs is largely represented in a different way than in natural science. An action is interpreted by an athlete in another language, and this is not a disadvantage, since the scientific description of the motor action is *secondary* in relation to the language in which this action is actually recorded by a person. (Even the most general representation, for example, of the act of walking fully reveals the indicated circumstance: *for the person himself performing this motor act*, this is, first of all, a *volitional effort*, more or less realized, in coordinating the “sense of the environment” with the “sense of the body, open to man in

this act.) A person may not have, and in general this most often happens, scientific knowledge about the motor action performed, and nevertheless this action is successful. And this is a fundamental circumstance. Therefore, in order for an active person to actually rely on natural-scientific knowledge, they must be previously rethought, recoded, translated into the language of the inner, in the ultimate variant - into the language of the transcendental, open to man *phenomenologically* - as a specific *case of experiencing his presence in the world*. - M. Merlo-Ponty: “Objective knowledge about action must also be brought into line with the body. Actual truths of natural sciences and psychology can be attached to a specific individual only if they pass through a philosophical, primarily phenomenological, clarification and correction” [13, p. 190]. (It is necessary to move from the idea of the motor scheme of action to the idea of its semantic scheme and consider the structure of the functional system that is realized in this case accordingly.) *To teach a person motor action - means, in fact, to teach him metaphysics, philosophy*. It is worth remembering that this is the meaning, in the end, that had the ancient Greeks’ wrestling and exercise in the palaestras and gymnasiums. And it was precisely this circumstance that made logically acceptable and practically possible the historical transformation that the Greek gymnasium underwent later in the future, becoming a place of philosophers’ performances, and then a general educational institution.

5. It should be also noted, that in general, a person always has the ability to apply the mentioned clarifications and recordings and always implements them, which is expressed, in particular, that when performing an action, he can successfully integrate the “sense of

environment” and “sense of the body” into one whole that is close in its essence to a meditative (*phenomenologically given*) experience. - M. Merleau-Ponty: “The body itself interprets, “visual data” appears in it through the prism of its “tactile sense”, and tactile through the prism of “visual sense” [13, c.200-201]. There is nothing “purely external” in human perception of any event and object, there is always an element of what is given in the *empathy* of this external, given internally - and vice versa. In particular, there are no representations of movement without appropriate motor skills (ideomotion), and there is no real motor act without mental components inevitably accompanying this act and produced by them. It is significant, however, that in practice a person’s ability to integrate the “sense of the environment” and the “sense of the body” into one whole is not constant in all cases, and much depends on the original model, according to which the motor action is perceived and understood, on methodological position that the subject occupies in the space of his own action, and the phenomenological approach in analyzing this case is preferable than the approaches of a different nature.

6. It is necessary to note that sports sciences and the corresponding methodological developments are currently carried out purely spontaneously in the direction of obtaining and using phenomenological knowledge. In particular, these sciences (most often in cases when their subject is cyclic sports) show a high interest in a special kind of integral experiences in which the external and internal are presented in unity: “the sense of water” is in the swimmer, “the sense of the move of the boat” - at the rower, etc. (Possession of these feelings is, as it is known, an indicator of a high level of individual's athletic fitness.) Attempt to obtain

the specific knowledge, that is, knowledge that allows for the performance of motor action its direct (without the need for appropriate recoding) use and thereby ensures proper methodological effectiveness of the pedagogical process, associated with the technical training of the athlete, is also carried out in another, but close to the specified, and, in fact, continuing the same line of obtaining knowledge of the phenomenological nature, as the most significant, direction. We are talking about the inclusion in the system of ideas about the process of mastering the motor action of such concepts as “an orientation basis of actions (OBA) and “main reference points” (MRP). At the same time, MRP is interpreted as a “single element” of reality, at the level of which the image of the action and the image of the environment in which the action takes place are combined, and it is on which the subject should concentrate his attention when performing the movement [1]. (“Sense of water” in swimming is for a sportsman the *main reference point*, the unity of external and internal, therefore the science of swimming is, in the ideal case, an extensive scientific interpretation of the phenomenon of “sense of water”.)

The undoubted advantage of such recommendations is, obviously, the very need for what we are talking about: they are given in the same language, are stated in principle by the same words that the athlete first of all uses (and, in fact, any person) in the process of performing a real action, realizing the purpose of the action, controlling its flow and interpreting its effectiveness. This is not the language of biomechanics, physiology, biochemistry, or even the language of psychology. (L.Matveev, considering this problem, stresses that instructions containing recommendations on the implementation of actions should not use words and terms that

are abstract - in the sense that they *do not cause the subject to have life-real ideas about the performing movement*”[12 , p.254].)

7. Thus, *a methodologically rigorous examination of the motor action makes it possible to get an idea about it that, in many of its points, is significantly different from the traditional one. Currently, this consideration is carried out mainly in the framework of philosophical anthropology and in phenomenology. Here, much of what remains outside the field of view of the traditional science of physical culture is revealed: that the human motor action in its essential, true realizations is not only directed by the subject, but also produces its subject; that the human body has spontaneous activity, and does not become active only in a situation when it is exposed to influences and effects from the external or internal environment; that as the motor action develops, the human body is becoming increasingly able to respond to those external and internal events that are caused by the presence and activity in the environment of the very body itself; that the motor action is controlled (reconstructed) from the point of contact of the body and the environment, and is not simply programmed by the CNS; that the maximum degree of automation of action implies not weakening, but, on the contrary, maximum clarity and activity of consciousness, which concentrates on what happens at the specified touch point and, in fact, is self-generated in it; that the relationship of the individual with the environment at the high level of mastery of the technique of the motor action is transferred from predominantly subject-object to subject-subject relationship; etc. [3; 4]. The idea of a motor action, which is based on an adequate methodology, suggests a correct intuition about the realization of this phenomenon, increases the general sense of movement in a person, and in scientific and*

educational terms - contributes to the formation of a reliable conceptual basis for its theoretical analysis, which, in turn, opens up new opportunities for the development of an arsenal of methodological tools that allow to solve highly effectively the problem of a person’s motor training.

8. The considered idea of the motor action leads us to a more meaningful understanding of the phenomenon of the *human body*. It also opens up the possibility of overcoming the positivist approach that still prevails in the physical sciences. - M. Heidegger: “The human body is essentially something other than an animal organism...That the physiology and physiological chemistry [biochemistry] of man as an organism can be investigated in a natural scientific way is no proof that the essence of man lies in this organicity, that is, in the scientifically explained body.” [18, p.323] Accordingly, “physical culture” is otherwise understood. Namely: this is *a special mode of functioning of the body*, within the framework of which the process of reproduction of a person as a creature endowed with the ability to self-consciousness and moral sense is carried out. Thus, here we have a *metaphysical phenomenon*. It is essential that in this case the active manifestations of the body, like any metaphysical event, are fully realized only when a person is striving for the absolute, for the transcendental, when this aspiration is actually realized, that is, when the subject is oriented towards experiencing his psychophysical being as a *metaphysical process*, and when it willfully supports the metaphysical, which is originally present in the relevant act. (This is exactly what happens, for example, *in the classical system of yoga*, the decisive moment in the implementation of which is the person’s orientation towards *samadhi*, and not just *asanas*.)



It should be remembered that this kind of bodily activity of a person, as an essentially metaphysical process, is in itself a truly *cultural situation*. (J. Huizinga: “The culture is either metaphysically oriented or there is no culture at all” [20, p.184]) The human essence is produced here. - M. Heidegger: “Metaphysics is a fundamental act of human existence” [17, p.460]; M. Mamardashvili: “A person is not assembled (not reproduced, not accomplished) if certain philosophical acts are not done, whether he knows about it or not” [10, p.234].

9. Motor action is a metaphysical reality. Moreover, as such, it is initially, essentially not an intellectual-theoretical act, but a *practically-corporal* act. M. Mamardashvili emphasizes, everything that a person has, *everything human in us* is “whether it is perception, thought, love, valor, whatever, whether it is conscience — all this, of course, is metaphysical in us. But not in the form of a theory. No, metaphysics can act only by means of realizations. Our flesh goes into action” [10, p.46]. It is fundamentally important to take into account that “the flesh goes into action” in any act of human culture: moral, intellectual, aesthetic, religious, etc. Any such act is a real case of the accomplishment of the act of physical culture. In order to be able to receive, for example, an aesthetic experience, it is necessary to transfer the body into a metaphysical mode. Therefore, the range of means for the development of physical culture is actually substantially greater than is commonly believed in the sciences of sports and physical culture. On the other hand, not any exercise in *motor activity* is really a situation of the development of physical culture. This development occurs only when a person is oriented metaphysically in the framework of the exercises. This does not mean, of course, that physical exercise, devoid

of this orientation, does not contribute to an increase in, for example, a *dynamometrically evaluated* force or another physical quality traditionally understood in sports theory. However, this kind of increase is obvious as an increase in the *functional capabilities* of the individual, and not the level of his *physical culture*. (The situation as a whole is the same here, as in the case of any other cultural event, for example, the high logical judgment of a certain situation is not yet evidence of an individual’s high intellectual culture.)

The human body, like all human, is represented threefold to man; this is the unity of the external, internal and phenomenological bodies. The boundaries between them are easily passable and mobile. (M. Merleau-Ponty, in particular, notes: “Our body forms a sphere around itself from other things, so that they become its complement and extension. Things are already encrusted in the flesh of my body, form part of its full definition, and the whole world is tailored from the same fabric as it is” [13, p.190].) A man exists on the border of the “outer-inner”, which he cultivates and which is movable. - M Bakhtin: “A person does not have an internal sovereign territory, he is all and always on the border ...” [1, p. 312]; K. Yaspers: “Man is a creature that should be able to live from its middle” [21, p.44].

10. In addition to the above, there are also other circumstances that raise the question of the need to modernize the sciences of physical culture and sport notably sharp. It is about understanding the *essence of sports*. At the ordinary, and often at the scientific and theoretical level, it usually does not adequately reveal the question of the essence of sport as a global phenomenon, and also does not provide a reasonable explanation of the reasons and nature of its unprecedented popularity in society. It should be noted that in ancient



Greece, where modern (Olympic) sport, in fact, originated, it was interpreted more meaningfully than it is today. Here, sport was actually perceived as an activity that emphatically reproduces the *agonal event* - the situation of human existence as such, it was assessed as *self-sufficient competition*, as a process in which a person's *worldwide ideological competence*, his readiness for true self-realization was tested. The Greek understood sport metaphysically and was inspired by its metaphysical meaning. (The Olympic winner is not just "the best athlete" here, he is "the best Greek.") Following the Greek tradition, we still need to understand sport in this way, as, generally speaking, P.Cubertin understood it as a whole when he asserted that for him, sport is, first of all, "religious consciousness" [8, p.91-92] and regretted that his contemporaries still do not understand the meaning of the words "sports religion", which, however, were understandable for the Greek [22, p.25].

11. The essential understanding of sports activities suggests that we have, again, a threefold formation, that sport is a *triad* that is in conjunction of worlds: external, internal, transcendental, and therefore a true understanding of sports implies the unity of three types of knowledge - respectively, *sociological, psychological and philosophical*. The methodology for obtaining knowledge of the latter type requires consideration of what is happening in sport not as a manifestation of the human *Self* activity, understood as an institution that exists and is able to realize itself *before* the start of motor activity, as if starting this activity, but as an institution that occurs in the process of a spontaneous act of the movement itself (in self-movement) of profound processes of being in the phenomenologically open to man point of his bodily presence in the world. The approach to

analysis, the necessity of which we are talking about here, makes it possible to remove the methodological miscalculation that is widespread in considering motor actions (and, in fact, a person as a whole), which V.Zinchenko and M.Mamardashvili call substantialism and rightly critically evaluate it: "Whether the brain thinks or homuncle thinks - these are all different projections of the same substantivism" [7, p. 115]. The authors emphasize: "The possibility of an objective approach to the world of mind and consciousness is real if we do not treat it as ready and given, but remember, keep in mind that this is always the established world of consciousness of any particular person" [7, p.116]. This is a fundamentally important position: its acceptance or rejection draws a sharp boundary between adequate and, accordingly, inadequate views on the essence of a person and on the nature of certain of its manifestations in general. Consciousness must not only once, at a certain stage of the individual development of a person (in infancy), arise and continue to control the body, but also itself in the process of human existence resume again and again, and the process of this renewal must precede or at least occur simultaneously with the implementation of the action. If this is not the case, then, as M. Merlo-Ponty remarks on this occasion, "it is impossible to understand through what mystical operation the idea of movement generates this movement in the body" [7, p.187].

In view of the above, the analysis of the motor action presupposes, as V.Zinchenko and M.Mamardashvili emphasize, the existence of concepts that "should relate to the work on the actual construction of the movement being studied. At the same time, it is remarkable that these are not concepts describing the work of "Self", it is rather "it" what works, not "Self".

When we say “it” it is an attempt to point out the fact of self-action of all that lives among things, there in the world of objects. The movement, like the psyche, is self-building and self-developing” [7, p.117].

12. In conclusion, we emphasize that, considering the need to modernize the conceptual foundations of the science of physical culture and sport, while emphasizing the importance of strengthening the position of the philosophical approach to analyzing the problems that are fundamental for these sciences, we do not talk about the need to completely replace the positivistic point by philosophical view. Strictly speaking, this kind of question is generally incorrect, and in the case of physical culture and sports, it is especially incorrect, since, within the framework of human social activity, sport and physical culture activities are among the spheres where the significance of *externally*

presented results is largely emphasized. This circumstance, by itself, presupposes the use of a *positivistic* approach when considering the results of what is happening and evaluating its effectiveness. Therefore, it is primarily about *increasing the presence* of a philosophical approach in comprehending and understanding the essence of physical culture and sports. This is relevant, as we tried to show, in a general cognitive respect, since it contributes to the transformation and development of the most positive knowledge, overcoming its radical and sometimes not fully adequate forms. It is equally important that in the socio-cultural context, the modernization in question is an important step towards the humanization of the sciences of physical culture and sports, which corresponds to the main trend in the development of the modern knowledge system as a whole.

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