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THE FORMATION OF A PERSONAL AND NATIONAL IDENTITY ON THE EXAMPLE OF SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY AS A SYMBOLIC CAPITAL

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ORCID: 0000-0003-3350-702X

ANGELOVA-IGOVA Boryana, Associate Professor, PhD

Bulgarian National Academy of Sports

(1700, Bulgaria, Sofia, Studentski grad, e-mail: igovab@gmail.com)

ORCID: 0000-0002-8550-2012

BORISSOVA Sylvia, Assistant Professor, PhD

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), Institute of philosophy and Sociology,

(1000, Bulgaria, Sofia, Serdika St., 4, e-mail: sylvia.borissova@gmail.com)

AuthorID: 1040087

SPIN-код: 9350-5032

ORCID: 0000-0002-1151-3544

YAKOVLEVA Liliana Sergeevna, PhD student

Siberian Federal University

(660041, Russia, Krasnoyarsk, Svobodny Avenue, 82A, building 24(A), e-mail: l.yakovleva128@gmail.com)

AuthorID: 358386

SPIN-код: 1838-9116

ORCID: 0000-0001-7009-8179

KUDASHOV Viacheslav Ivanovich, Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Professor,
the Head of the Department of Philosophy

Siberian Federal University

(660041, Russia, Krasnoyarsk, Svobodny Avenue, 82A, building 24(A), e-mail: vkudashov@mail.com)

Abstract. The article is devoted to the study of personal and national identities on the example of sports photos as a symbolic capital. The purpose of this study is to show how photography and sports come together, in a way that together contributes to the consolidation of the nation, contributes to national pride and identity, and hence - to forming personal identity on the base of them either. The structural-functional approach is used, in particular, the theory of „social action“ by the American philosopher J. G. Mead. Photography is the channel through which the most international language such as sports can be transmitted, and the individual experience by it unified and integrated in the process of forming personal identity. Of particular interest are the photographs of athletes in Europe and how they contribute to the accumulation of symbolic capital for nation-states, and for self-determination of personal identity. The authors note that photography is an important part of people's daily lives, and its significance goes beyond their nature to entertain. A photographic image provides the basis for identification. A person through a visual image seeks to determine his personal, and then national identity. In today's world, identity is a dynamic system. In this regard, it can be compared with sports, which also constantly develop and ultimately open up new sports, modify qualification competitions, etc. Another social field that is on the rise at the same time is professional sports. By the mid-20th century, the sport of the privilege of the rich was becoming a mass sport. It was not until the 20th century that workers, women and minority groups had access to sports. The authors conclude that in the context of the importance of interdisciplinary research, which allows revealing the processes of formation of national and personal identity, research of this nature can take on further development.

Keywords: identity, self-identity, self-identification, national identity, self-determination, visual image, punctum, philosophy of sport, social philosophy, symbolic capital.

ФОРМИРАНЕ НА ЛИЧНА И НАЦИОНАЛНА ИДЕНТИЧНОСТ НАПРИМЕР СПОРТНИ СНИМКИ КАТО СИМВОЛЕН КАПИТАЛ

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АНГЕЛОВА-ИГОВА Боряна, професор, доктор по философия

Българска национална академия по спорт

(1700, България, София, Студентски град, e-mail: igovab@gmail.com)

БОРИСОВА Силвия, асистент професор, доктор по философия

Българска академия на науките (БАН), Институт по философия и социология

(1000, България, София, ул. Сердика, 4, e-mail: sylvia.borissova@gmail.com)

ЯКОВЛЕВА Лилиана Сергеевна, аспирант

Сибирски федерален университет

(660041, Руска федерация, Красноярск, пр. Свободен, 82А, сграда № 24 (А), e-mail: l.yakovleva128@gmail.com)

КУДАШОВ Вячеслав Иванович, доктор по философия, професор,

ръководител на катедра по философия

Сибирски федерален университет

(660041, Руска федерация, Красноярск, проспект Свободен, 82А, сграда № 24 (А), e-mail: vkudashov@mail.com)

Анотация. Статията е посветена на изследването на личната и националната идентичност, като се използва примерът на спортни фотографии като символичен капитал. Целта на това проучване е да покаже как фотографиите и спортът се комбинират по такъв начин, че заедно да допринесат за консолидирането на нацията, националната гордост и идентичност и следователно за формирането на лична идентичност на тяхна основа. Структурно-функционалният подход се използва, по-специално, теорията за «социалното действие» от американския философ Дж. Г. Мид. Фотографията е канал, чрез който може да се предаде международен език като спорта и индивидуални преживявания, които тя обединява и интегрира в процеса на формиране на лична идентичност. Особен интерес представляват снимки на спортисти в Европа и как те допринасят за натрупването на символичен капитал за националните държави и за лично самоопределение. Авторите посочват, че фотографията е важна част от ежедневието на хората и нейното значение надхвърля развлеченията. Значението на фотографията става още по-силно изразено в началото на 20-ти век, когато тя се превръща в доминиращ визуален език на печатните материали. Фотографското изображение предоставя основата за лична идентификация. Човек чрез визуален образ се стреми да дефинира своя лична, а след това и национална идентичност. В днешния свят идентичността е динамична система. В това

отношение може да се сравни със спорт, който също има постоянно развитие и с течение на времето отваря нови спортове, модифицира квалификационни състезания и т.н. Друга социална сфера, която също е във възход, е професионалният спорт. Към средата на 20 век спортът като привилегия на богатите се превръща в масов спорт и едва през 20 век работниците, жените и членовете на малцинствата получават достъп до спорт. Авторите стигат до извода, че в контекста на важността на интердисциплинарните изследвания, които дават възможност да се разкрият процесите на формиране на национална и лична идентичност, изследвания от този характер могат да придобият по-нататъшно развитие.

Ключови думи: идентичност, самоидентичност, самоидентификация, национална идентичност, самоопределение, визуален образ, пунктуум, философия на спорта, социална философия, символен капитал.

ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ ЛИЧНОЙ И НАЦИОНАЛЬНОЙ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТИ НА ПРИМЕРЕ СПОРТИВНЫХ ФОТОГРАФИЙ КАК СИМВОЛИЧЕСКОГО КАПИТАЛА

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АНГЕЛОВА-ИГОВА Боряна, профессор, доктор философских наук

Болгарская Национальная Академия спорта

(1700, Болгария, София, ул. Студенческий городок, e-mail: igovab@gmail.com)

БОРИССОВА Силвия, ассистент профессора, доктор философских наук

Болгарская Академия Наук (БАН), Институт философии и социологии

(1000, Болгария, София, ул. Сердика, 4, e-mail: sylvia.borissova@gmail.com)

ЯКОВЛЕВА Лилиана Сергеевна, аспирант

Сибирский федеральный университет

(660041, Россия, Красноярск, пр. Свободный, 82А, корпус № 24 (А), e-mail: lyakovleva128@gmail.com)

КУДАШОВ Вячеслав Иванович, доктор философских наук, профессор,

заведующий кафедрой философии

Сибирский федеральный университет

(660041, Россия, Красноярск, пр. Свободный, 82А, корпус № 24 (А), e-mail: vkudashov@mail.com)

Аннотация. Статья посвящена изучению личной и национальной идентичности на примере спортивных фотографий как символического капитала. Цель данного исследования - показать, как фотография и спорт объединяются таким образом, что вместе способствуют консолидации нации, национальной гордости и самобытности, а значит - формированию на их основе и личной идентичности. Используется структурно-функциональный подход, в частности теория «социального действия» американского философа Дж. Г. Мида. Фотография - это канал, по которому может передаваться международный язык, такой как спорт, и индивидуальный опыт, который она объединяет и интегрирует в процессе формирования личностной идентичности. Особый интерес представляют фотографии спортсменов в Европе и то, как они способствуют накоплению символического капитала для национальных государств и для самоопределения личности. Авторы отмечают, что фотография является важной частью повседневной жизни людей, а ее значение выходит за рамки развлечения. Значение фотографии стало еще более заметным в начале XX века, когда она стала доминирующим визуальным языком печатных материалов. Фотографическое изображение дает основу для идентификации личности. Индивид через визуальный образ стремится определить свою личностную, а затем и национальную идентичность. В современном мире идентичность – это динамическая система. В этом плане ее можно сравнить со спортом, который также имеет постоянное развитие и со временем открывает новые виды спорта, видоизменяет квалификационные соревнования и т.д. Другой социальной сферой, которая одновременно находится на подъеме, является профессиональный спорт. К середине XX века спорт как привилегия богатых становится массовым видом спорта, и только в XX веке рабочие, женщины и представители меньшинств получают доступ к спорту. Авторы приходят к выводу, что в условиях значимости междисциплинарных исследований, позволяющих раскрыть процессы формирования национальной и личной идентичности, исследование подобного характера могут приобретать дальнейшее развитие.

Ключевые слова: идентичность, самоидентичность, самоидентификация, национальная идентичность, самоопределение, визуальный образ, пунктуум, философия спорта, социальная философия, символический капитал.

INTRODUCTION

The Self-Determination of National Identity through the Symbolic Capital of Sports Photography

Symbolic capital of Sports Photography

Photography is an important part of people's daily lives. Its significance goes beyond their nature to entertain. The purpose of this study is to show how photography and sports come together, in a way that together contributes to the consolidation of the nation, contributes to national pride and identity, and hence – to forming personal identity on the base of them either.

The term *Symbolic capital*, according to Pierre Bourdieu “accumulates primarily from the fulfillment of social obligations that are themselves embedded with potential for prestige. Much as with the accumulation of financial capital, symbolic capital is ‘rational’ in that it can be freely converted into leveraging advantage within social and political spheres. Yet unlike financial capital, symbolic capital is not boundless, and its value may be limited or magnified by the historical context in which it was accumulated. Symbolic capital must be identified within the cultural and historical frame through which it originated in order to fully explain its influence across cultures” (Bourdieu, 1984 [1]). We think that athletes produced symbolic capital and this “production” became stronger because of the new “channel” i.e. the pho-

tography. The products, achievements, and especially the Olympic medals of athletes are a symbol of national dignity, prosperity, and successful governance. The country that could take home more gold medals from the Olympic Games was regarded as more powerful and more developed. On the other hand, the gold medal could consolidate and reunify people from one nation. Before the rise of international sport competitions, symbolic capital was found in archeological artifacts or in the works of “national” writers. Nowadays the gold medal and the world record are this kind of symbolic capital that can stimulate national dignity and consolidate the people from one community. Top athletes are very famous and can become decision makers (Angelova-Igova, 2017 [2]).

At events such as the Olympic Games, athletes demonstrate their qualities. They can become a symbol of the human rights movement as when two African-American athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos raised their black-gloved fists during the award ceremony of the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico. In this case Carlos and Smith created a collective meaningful narrative for their community which should be the “true winning in sport” or as John Gleaves described it: “sport also writes meaningful narratives that speak about communities. These collective narratives provide stories about both those who follow the sport and

about the communities that embrace the sport. Such collective narratives occur because sports are shaped by communities to provide individuals with explanatory accounts about certain meaningful characteristics in publicly demonstrable activities. These meaningful characteristics, which combine different qualities of physical prowess such as strength, endurance, and physical skill with tactical cunning, moral virtue, courage, or other personal traits, both reveal athletes' personal identities and allow athletes to shape them further" (Gleaves, 2017 [3]).



Figure 1 – Gold medalist Tommie Smith (center) and bronze medalist John Carlos (right) showing the raised fist on the podium after the 200 m race at the 1968 Summer Olympics. They are both wearing Olympic Project for Human Rights badges. Peter Norman, the silver medalist (left) also wears an OPHR badge in solidarity with them. Photo source: Angelo Cozzi (Mondadori Publishers) – <http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/the-american-sprinters-tommie-smith-john-carlos-and-peter-news-photo/186173327>

In those cases we can see athletes as heroes and we can say that the creation of meaningful narrative is the real win in sport. Although Carlos and Smith knew that the consequences for them would not be good, they did it to support their cause. The photo of Carlos and Smith standing on the honor ladder, with their hands raised, protesting because of their abused human rights, is circulating around the globe and giving hope to the oppressed that there may be a change. All of the above can be considered as one of the programs for the development of post-existentialist philosophy.

METHOD

To Create One's Own Meaningful Narrative: The Symbolic Capital of Sports Photographs Loaded at Personal Level

The reverie' as the link between individual and society

The mechanism of social phenomenology in terms of sports photography as a symbolic capital for the self-determination of a national identity will be, on its turn, further analyzed in the context of personal identity. On the one hand, it was the Western cultural situation of the 20th century that allowed the symbolic capital generated by the new visual rhetoric of human body in sports to be given social and political weight not only at national level but personally as well. This phenomenon was made easier by the transition of the Western world sports ideology from elitist to mass and popular level. Along with this, the deployment of photography not only served to emphasize the mechanical and technological

aspects of image-making but namely it was that made it possible to capture, decompose and watch separately, one by one, the mechanical and technological aspects of the very movement of the human body in all types of sports: the incredible power of photography to strictly follow the innumerable biophysiological capabilities of human body instant by instant was revealed (Mileva, 2000 [4]). Thus, a quality new vision and knowledge of human body was brought, and a thoroughly new perspective of self-determination of individual identity appeared.

On the other hand, the very existential, psychological and semiotic mechanism of the individual to form and self-determine one's own personal identity is rather visual, image-suggestive and even cinematographic. That is why the American philosopher, psychologist and sociologist George H. Mead asserted that the nature of aesthetic experience was rooted in 'the reverie' – that inchoate phenomenon of the internal human imagery which the invention of the press, the stereopticon and the movie have projected before us. The reverie, or also that phenomenon of daydreaming and indefinite longing or thoughtfulness in images, "the type of happening, and the sort of imagery, that run behind the average man's eyes and fill up the interstices of overt conduct" (Mead, 1926 [5, p.389]), no matter how fragile, fleeting and brittle it is, is considered by Mead as the *conditio sine qua non* for a full-worth relations between individual and society. And significant moment that the press, the stereopticon and the movie have done for the culture evolution is to "emphasize and expand what is needed to render the reverie vivid and concrete" [ibid.]: "Our visual images are slight, incomplete, and not readily controlled. We do our thinking in the form of conversation, and depend upon the imagery of words for our meanings. It is only at favored moments that vivid pictures of the past throng the imagination largely in filling out perception, as in reading or in the recognition of seen objects, rather than in satisfying the inward eye which was the bliss of Wordsworth's solitude. When motion was added to the stereopticon, a certain so craved delight was flung at the community with open hands" (Mead, 1926 [5, p.391]).

To Mead's opinion, "It is this realm of the reverie – of imagined enjoyable results – which dictates the policy of the daily press" (Mead, 1926 [5, p.390]). This observation is basically the same as the effect of that Berliner Illustrirte's front cover published seven years earlier: imagery has irrefutable political impact over people's reverie and value attitude. But, lest creative imagination be just fancying remote from reality, Mead was explicit that the authentic core of aesthetic experience – the only experience we could ever certainly have (Ferry, 1993 [6, p. 104]) – is when "the pleasure in that which is seen serves to bring out the values of the life that one lives", when "experience is rather a catharsis, in an Aristotelian phrase, than a reversion" (Mead, 1926 [5, pp. 392-393]).

In conclusion, Mead revealed the great symbolic and socially significant potential of the reverie, that phenomenon "infected with privacy and therefore subject to disintegration. But it passes into the universal meanings of common discourse and co-operative effort, and out of it arise the forms of universal beauty, the intuitions of the inventor, the hypotheses of the scientist, and the creations of the artist. It is that part of the inner life of man which cannot be given its implicated meaning because of the incompleteness of social organization" (Mead, 1926 [5, p.393]). Mead was a passionate adept of John Dewey's words that "the shared experience is the greatest of human goods", and namely Mead was who left a lasting trace with his socio-psychological theory, which provided explanations that the individual's behavior and activity was determined by the activity that was social – at odds with the individualistic approach in psychoanalysis of his time. It is him who introduced the term 'reference groups' – social groups to which we refer to all other groups in our life and social experience. The reference group is the one where we feel best, most of all ourselves. In addition, each of us has a tendency to pass on the traditions

from the reference group to all the other groups of which we are a part. We could further connect Mead's concepts of reverie and referent group and say that the latter is a social environment, or a community, where one's personal reverie as the most natural and authentic core of one's aesthetic and value experience could be commensurable with the Other's reverie and most authentic core; and other groups serve for projection of this commensurability.

RESULTS

Symbolic capital of the Human Body Photographed and Its Political Consequences

Photography can thoroughly change the political establishment itself. A typical example is a picture appeared on August 21, 1919 as a front cover of the weekly magazine *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung*. The front-page photograph created a sensation showing Friedrich Ebert, the first president of Germany, and Defense Minister Gustav Noske in a trip to the beach, and the ugliness of their bodies seriously impacted national audience. The magazine cover invited viewers to judge the bodies of Ebert and Noske, and stressed the attention that they did not like what they saw. The bad appearance of these two men implies visions of decline of the State rather than prosperity. The *Berliner Illustrirte* actually confronted its readers with a vivid corporeal metaphor for the state of the postwar republic at its very inception. It was "soft", just like the men who governed it". (Jensen, 2010 [7, p.6]). This picture was a "game changer" and unfortunately followed the change in the regime and to the so-called Weimar Republic – the era known as the Great Disorder. In order to compete with the French, Italy and Soviet famous art models a number of German cultural spokesmen tried to invent a Nordic racial type derived by the "Blood and soil" (Silver, 2011 [8, p. 160]) ideology. It became obvious in 1929 when Gustav Hartlaub, the influential critic and director of the Kunsthalle Mannheim, coined the term "Neue Sachlichkeit" (*New Objectivity*) because he wanted to oppose to the left-wing artists as Otto Dix and George Grosz. In the same year, he organized a photo exhibition in Mannheim, called *New Objectivity. German Painting since Expressionism*. This exhibition signified not only the balance of the new painting but also *New Vision* photography pioneered at the Bauhaus and International Style architecture. The photographers' sought minimalist presentation of subjects isolated on a stark background – weather treating people, places etc. They tried to show a "real, enduring world" (Silver, 2011 [8, p. 161]). The art critic Walther Petry described the formula in his manifesto of New Objectivity as: "the object, clearly recorded and reproduced without any artistic transformation, must communicate <...> the objective meaning of itself <...> beyond a range of subjects through a mechanical effect as the photographic compendium. (Silver, 2011 [8, p. 161]). He gave an example with: *The World Is Beautiful* by Albert Renger-Patzsch and the pictures from Edward Steichen especially his famous picture Izidora Duncan at the Portal of the Parthenon, 1920 and August Sandler's - *Coal Carrier* by August Sander, and the *Secretary of the West German Radio Station*, (The Museum of Modern Art NY). In 1922, August Sandler started his project *People of the Twentieth Century*, that had to objectify human subjects through its panoramic index of German social type. It is considered as the most characteristic work of New Objectivity as well as Reifentahl's propaganda move *Olympia*. Unfortunately, all those pictures, movies and art waves were used for political propaganda. It is obvious in 1936 when Berlin Olympics were to be the laboratory and demonstration of the new regime's efforts at remaking the National Socialist body. Leni Reifentahl's celebrated, thrilling, highly aestheticized documentary film about the Games, *Olympia*, financed secretly by the Nazi government to serve as international propaganda for the regime, begins with an often overlooked, dreamy, classicizing prologue. Views of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia and the Acropolis in Athens are followed by a series of shots, with smoky transitions between them (presumably the "mists" of time), featuring

Greek and Roman sculpture, going to rest on the *Discobolos* – a copy of which Hitler would acquire in 1938 for his personal collection – that comes miraculously to life as modern as German decathlon competitor Erwin Huber. Of course, the most important people of this period were sportsmen. All journals, sports weeklies, and the wider mass culture painted a picture of sports champions that sometimes stabilized, frequently challenged, and ultimately reshaped the notion of modern man and modern woman in Weimar Germany. The impressive physical feats of male and female athletes raised the level of expectations placed on the human body and opened up new routes to social and financial success. The press celebrated Suzanne Lenglen as a famous and very good female tennis player" (Jensen, 2010 [7]).

American art critic Marius de Zayas rightly believed that "the reality of the forms can be submitted only to a mechanical process, which does not interfere decisively handmade factor. There is no other process than photography that would allow this to be achieved. A photographer, a true photographer, is one who is able, in a state of complete self-report, to achieve such a clear vision of things that he can understand and feel the beauty and reality of forms" (De Zayas, 1913 [9, p. 45]).

In 1929 the playwright – and Bertolt Brecht's protege – Marieluise Fleisser wrote in Germany: "When people are asked today the type of person they consider the representative of the specifically modern sentiment, those in the know name the athlete. <...> We are burdened by the idea that we are a race cast out of chaos. <...> Hardness toward ourselves is imperative. The forces suffocating in the world-weariness must be freed for a determined accomplishment. We must begin with ourselves to make this body, which we are, bigger. <...> The point is to show the seeds of will, which will awaken an energetic race responsible for driving itself forward, thus creating for itself a conscience" (Silver, 2011 [8, p. 21]).

The Russian avant-garde art and the new visual rhetoric of human body

At the same historical time the new art was born in the Soviet Union. We can see the initial promotion of sportsmen and sportswomen as figures symptomatic of the new Soviet age emerged and coincided with the rise of the cultural left in the early post-revolutionary period. More importantly, pictures of *Sport* first appeared in an entirely new medium: photomontage. In 1919, Gustav Klutis produced what he later declared to be the first photomontage produced in the Soviet Union. In 1922, Klutis created a photomontage entitled *Sport*. In this work, documentary photographs of male gymnasts are superimposed onto a background of simple geometric forms. These, at top and bottom, spell out the word 'SPORT' in the Cyrillic alphabet, while the concentric circles at the center of the work bind the various components of the composition together. In the language of semiotics, we say that this work is an iconic symbol of the material, objective world.

More importantly, however, this geometrical emphasis serves to reinforce the circular motion of the gymnasts variously performing upon parallel bars and the horizontal bar. This topic soon became popular in the Soviet visual arts. In 1922, the young typographer and graphic artist El Lissitzky incorporated a documentary photograph of a soccer player into a complex composition of floating and intersecting geometrical forms. For both Klutis and Lissitzky, the reintroduction of what K. Michael Hays has described as an 'affirmative iconic representation' was clearly a crucial element in the formulation of a new visual vocabulary (O'Mahony, 2006 [10]). It is the presence of geometric forms that cause the corresponding semantic associations and allow the use of the term "iconic signs". We assume that understanding is a symbol. And any symbol is "rooted in being" and is based on culture.

Moreover, the deployment of photography also served to emphasize the mechanical and technological aspects of image-making and the possibility for mass-production, thus

suggesting the important role that such works would now play as a component of popular, rather than elitist, culture (O'Mahony, 2006 [10]). In our understanding hermeneutically oriented philosophy - is, first of all, the idea of the specified ways through which we can interpret what he saw, and thus come to the definition of personal and national identity.

The sports theme played a major role within the visual arts of the whole 20th century – and this role is no less important today (Ivanov, 2016 [11]). Countless public exhibitions, as well as the pages of both popular and specialist journals, were inundated with representations of youthful Soviet sportsmen and sportswomen, whether executed in the medium of photography, painting or printmaking. Cultural representations of sport and physical culture in the Soviet Union were truly mass produced (O'Mahony, 2006 [10]).

Nowadays sports photography is remastered in various sub-branches and further deployed by the new technologies and refined human sensitivity and imagination; yet, its main pledge to impress in a still capture all the grandeur, challenge and devotion of the athlete's motion still remains (Pedev, 2014 [12]).

DISCUSSION

The History of Beauty Retold through Sports Photography

In terms of social phenomenology, the process of interiorization of the radical Otherness and the process of self-determination of the individual are parallel and fundamentally inseparable; such are also the demythologization of radical Otherness and non-identity, on the one hand, and the consolidation of one's own identity and mythology, or meaningful narrative, on the other. This is the essence of *The Work of Myth* by Hans Blumenberg (Blumenberg, 1985 [13]) in brief; what is surprising in Theodor Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory* and elucidating at a new angle the whole history of fine arts and aesthetic perception is that the very opportunity of beauty is subordinate to the same double-process: beauty becomes beauty when the frightening becomes ugly and beauty can safely determinate itself as its opposite (Adorno, 1997 [14]), i.e. when the radical Otherness is already interiorized and remains just an empty shell for safe self-projection of an identity already integrated.

There is a vast diversity in the ways in which a child, youth, adult, boy or girl, man or woman etc., take the photographs and image of athletes and commensurate with them, whether physically, personally or both (whether in a conscious way or not), or in a certain way find the treats of the human body ideal (whether Olympian, Vitruvian etc.) in them.

What is common for all of the social groups and multifarious culture attitudes to sports photography and image-making, unlike fashion photography and photography of synthetic performativity arts (egg. dance, dance theater, art performance, happening).

Also dealing with the ideal of beauty, is the very cult to the beautiful and shaped human body but moreover – to the achievements and records it could break at the limits of its both physical and psychical capabilities: to the surmount of these limits. This is the way in which the fact that top athletes can become decision makers due to their popularity, and even idols in popular culture, reveals natural psychological, semiotic and phenomenological mechanisms of the human being.

Any individual is characterized by considering himself as a goal and the embodiment of its meaning. It is for this reason that mankind seeks to capture moments of important events with itself in the photograph. In real history, fragmentation (locality, national identity) dominates. Indeed, at the moment, history is only becoming universal. With the help of photos, it creates the preconditions for the transformation of the individual images into a leading method of learning a different culture and to the principle of the relationship between people and cultures, besides the photographic image allows to set the relationship of humanity as a whole. Here we would like to emphasize the importance of sports photography as a symbolic capital. K. Marx divides "the realm

of necessity", especially economic, where the main form of life of the individual is a "work dictated by need and external expediency" and "kingdom of freedom" lying "on the other side" of the economy, where "begins that development of human power, which is an end in itself ..." (Marx, 1961 [15, p. 387]). A greater role here are new epistemological installations, which are formed in the modern world of globalization. This means that a person today, being in the process of self-determination, should direct the search for his own identity not only outside, considering and evaluating a different culture, but first of all deep into himself, to his culture. This approach seems to us particularly important, as it plays an important role in understanding the principles of knowledge of other cultures.

The Western history of philosophy of human body emerges from the idea of Greek-Roman antiquity of the human body as an ideal, as the perfect coincidence of spirit and matter – the Absolute Spirit for the first time looks through human eyes and rediscover itself in matter in the form of the human body (Hegel, 1975 [16, pp. 153–298]); and goes through the theocentric idea of the Middle Ages of the body as *nature*, inferior nature through which the soul tries to reconnect with the Spirit of Christian God. Since paradise was already lost, the Modern Period managed to return paradise in the inner idea through the Renaissance of human body and aesthetics and put again on pedestal the ideal of beauty and grace embodied in the human figure and motion. In the emphasized anthropocentric worldview of modern era and in the light of the characteristics of the previous worldviews of Western culture, it is more obvious than ever that all the history of beauty tells the same story: the mythology of beauty is a mythology of identity (Borissova, 2017 [17]).

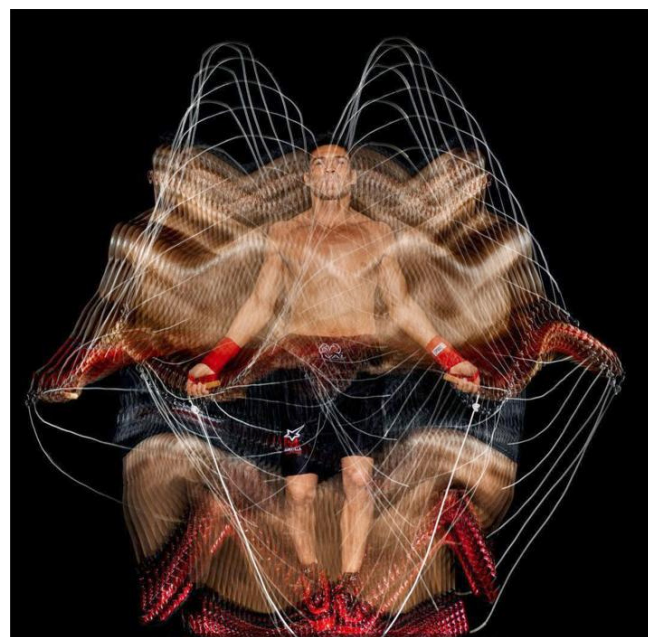


Figure 2 – This incredible multiple stroboscopic flashes capture of the Argentine middleweight boxer Sergio Martinez was part of the exhibition of 170 eminent photographers Who Shoots Sports: A Photographic History, 1843 to the Present, July 15, 2016–January 8, 2017, Brooklyn Museum. Boxing Study 1805 Sergio Martinez (2010). Photo by Howard Schatz/Staley-Wise Gallery, New York

Thus, the new visual rhetoric of human body of the 20th century again launches it as a 'positive iconic representation' after the dark Middle Ages neglecting human body, beauty and senses just in the same manner, and the most 'positive iconic representation' of all times appears to be the idea of beauty embodied in the human figure.

What is the germ of the New Objectivity in constructivist and functionalist avant-garde art is, at last account, the

so-called 'New Beauty' (Šalda, 1950 [18]), the 'beauty of speed' (Marinetti, 1909 [19]) – the radiant center of the 'New Art' (Ortega y Gasset, 1969 [20]), the 'Young Art' (Šalda, 1950 [18]) designating the inhuman art (Ortega y Gasset, 1969 [20]) and the post-anthropocentric worldview of the contemporary culture (Ferrando, 2016 [21]). What is of crucial importance for the post-anthropocentric era is that the mythology of beauty oscillates around paradise in the inner idea: the center of beauty as we know it as the perfect coincidence of spirit and matter is now even more sacred and elusive. The Old-Greek *καλός* means not only beautiful but also lovely, healthy, proportional, harmonious, good, quality, useful, right, moral, virtuous, noble (Liddell & Scott, 1940 [22]) designating how beauty is determined like a positive totality versus all unhealthy, ignoble, fragmentary and chaotic in this world. If the previous subparagraph discussed the reverie as the *sine qua non* of the phenomenological, psychological and semiotic connection between human being and society, now the *sine qua non* of this connection in the post-anthropocentric situation can be considered to be Barthes' *punctum*: that point of the most familiar and yet terrifyingly unknown, turning us over from the ground up when look at a photograph – nostalgia invading us that blows our minds (Barthes, 1980 [23, pp. 27, 41, 42–43, 45]). More than ever self-determination of personal identity shrinks into a *punctum* and seeks after a more and more elusive and complex ideal of beauty as a guarantee for regaining the ideal of human body for ourselves, and with it – our totality and inner paradise as well.

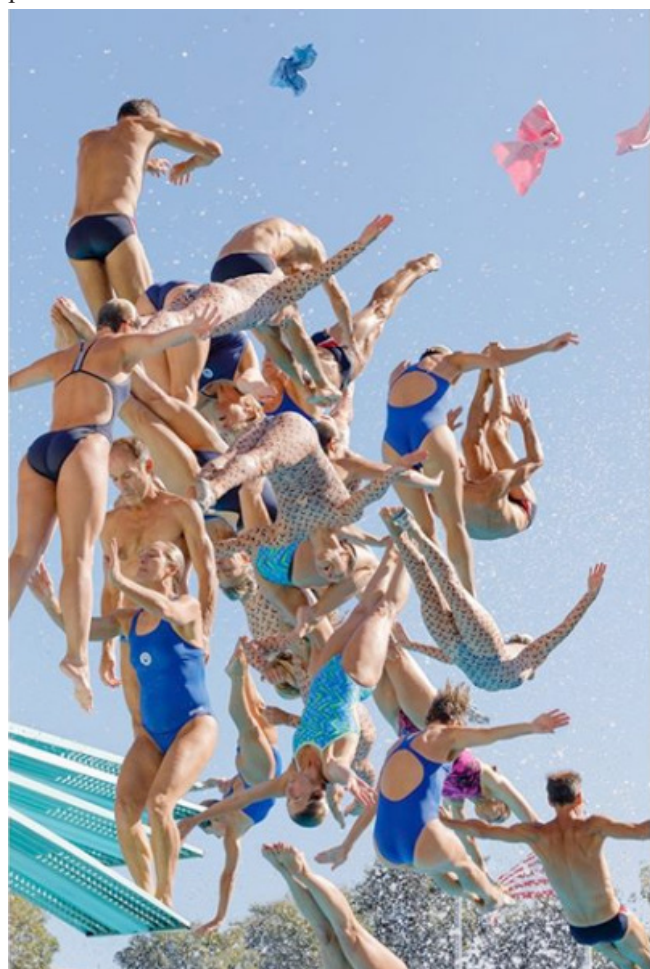


Figure 3 – Photo by Pelle Cass, 2019. Source: Instagram.

According to S. S. Avanesov, "the cultural identity of individuals is expressed through the visual specificity of the culture to which they belong. It's impossible to adequately explore a culture in its social or anthropological dimension without studying its visual parameters" (Avanesov, 2015 [24, p. 19]). It is very important for us to use the term "cul-

ture" to denote the totality of values and the ways of their symbolic expression that are inherent in society and serve as the basis for its personal and national identification. A photographic image provides the basis for identification. A person through a visual image seeks to determine his personal, and then national identity. In today's world, identity is a dynamic system. In this regard, it can be compared with sports, which also constantly develop and ultimately open up new sports, modify qualification competitions, etc. A photographic image, in particular sports photography, is a language, genuine reasoning, which has questions the answer to which may be a photograph, which includes positive or negative judgments.

CONCLUSION

So it would be no exaggeration to say that sports photography is a peculiar 'dream machine' for the individual: and, to be more exact, an identity-making machine of the body and physical achievements dreamt, an image-making machine of the human being triumphing over transient matter and gravity.

Sports photography seems to us to be an international language that is understood by a large community of people around the world. It is with the help of the language of photography, in particular sports, that the basic condition for understanding national and personal identity as symbolic capital is born.

Due to the objective process of transforming photographic images into world history and an ever-growing interest in these issues, photography is a constructor of personal as well as national identity.

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