

Mens Sana in Corpore Sano? Body and Mind in Ancient Greece

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The popular noations that the ancient Greek athlete was more ‘well rounded’ than ours is wholly false, nor was there every any Greek ideal to achieve or pursue both intellectual and bodily excellence. Earlier Greeks judged excellence in either category invaluable, but an increasingly vocal minority of intellectuals, apparently jealous of the athletes’ great rewards, denigrated athletes and bodily achievement. Mind, they said, was superior to body. By later antiquity, some authors even asserted that athletes were as stupid as animals, and their achievements no greater. Christianity welcomed the philosophers’ depreciation of the body, and mediaeval ascetism carried it to the extremes that de Coubertin and others called “hatred of the flesh.” The latter part of the paper explains how the rebirth of athletics dealt with these matters, and how false notions of the Greeks entered popular belief.

Some classicists, many historians of sport and most members of the modern Olympic movement idealize the athletic system of ancient Greece, rating it superior to our own. Typical remarks are these by Avery Brundage, long the president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Brundage’s powerful presidency, even after the disappearance of amateurism, still influences much of current Olympic thinking:

In the enlightened ‘Golden Age’, true culture was well rounded, requiring both physical and mental training. Philosophers, dramatists, poets, sculptors and athletes met on common ground. Plato, the great thinker, was also a great athlete and won honors in the games. . . . There was truly a marriage of fine arts and sport! Man probably more nearly realized that proud and happy condition of a sound mind in a sound body than ever before or since.¹

Brundage’s are the customary, emotional words, by now even hackneyed: ‘both physical and mental training’; ‘well rounded’; and ‘a sound mind in a sound body’. Many people, even now, when they repeat that last well-worn phrase, leave it in its original Latin: *mens sana in corpore sano*. So Pierre de Coubertin, founder and himself the long-serving president of the IOC before Brundage, writes much like Brundage:

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‘Le sport. . . L’ heureux équilibre dans le domain moral: *Mens sana in corpore sano*, disaient les anciens.’² And, like Brundage, Coubertin and many others present this phrase as if it had somehow been – even though it is Latin, not Greek – the philosophy of ancient Greek sport and especially of Olympic athletes. They view it almost as if it had been the dictum or motto of the ancient games.³ Yet the widespread belief that ancient Greek athletes were the prototypes of our own contemporary Rhodes scholars, cultivating their intellects as well as their bodies, is outright nonsense. There is no evidence whatsoever for this popular idea.

We know the names of a thousand or so individual ancient Olympic and Pythian victors. Not one of them was ever noted for any intellectual achievement. And no Greek prominent in the intellectual world ever won a major athletic victory. But what about Plato who, Brundage says, was ‘a great athlete and won honors in the games’?⁴ Brundage does not specify which games, but others do, such as Allen Guttmann, a distinguished American cultural historian: ‘Socrates . . . had participated in the Isthmian games.’⁵ Even Plato, who never wavered from his conviction that the world of pure ideas was of a higher order than the sphere of the corporeal, had been a wrestler in his youth, and had won prizes at the Pythian, Nemean and Isthmian games.’⁶

If these reports of Plato’s victories are true, Plato achieved a truly impressive record. These three games, along with the Olympics, made up an exclusive ‘big four’ in the ancient athletic circuit, and competition was limited to only a dozen or so of the very best wrestlers in the Greek world. If they are not true, Guttmann can hardly be blamed. His source for these details is not the enthusiastic amateur layman Brundage, but the respected, prestigious British classical scholar E.N. Gardiner. Gardiner’s 1910 and 1930 books to this day are still the standard reference works, even for scholars; and Gardiner himself still passes unchallenged⁷ as the world’s best authority on the ancient Greek games. As another British classics professor, H.A. Harris, puts it: ‘In the study of Greek athletics, E.N. Gardiner towers high above all the others.’⁸

Gardiner had given Plato an even better career than Guttmann when he wrote: ‘Trained by his father Ariston, who was a distinguished athlete,⁹ [Plato] won victories in wrestling at Delphi, Nemea, and the Isthmus, and is even stated, with less probability, to have won the Olympic crown.’¹⁰ Gardiner cites no source, just the vague ‘is stated,’ with no agent for his passive verb. Did he have any ancient source? Yes and no. There is a sentence written in the Greek language which says that Plato ‘won at the Olympic and Nemean games.’¹¹ But a classicist might question whether it is ancient, since it was apparently not written until the dawn of the Middle Ages, almost a millennium after Plato’s death. And Gardiner’s source hardly merits the word ‘source’; for it is patently false, as the German scholar Werner Rudolph proved beyond doubt a few decades ago.¹² The sentence in question is found in a very late, very brief, quite silly and anonymous biography of Plato, which heavily gilds an already much gilded tale. We can readily follow the steps from classical reality to medieval fantasy.

Plato himself says that he often wrestled at his local gym. That, and no more than that, is the source of his magnificent ‘big-time’, but posthumous, athletic career. From that detail alone, the story snowballs into a comedy of errors. The earliest

source to attribute any competitive athletic activity to Plato comes from the second century AD, about 500 years after the philosopher's death. It is in Latin, not Greek, and it says absolutely nothing about the philosopher actually winning anywhere. It is a passage in Apuleius, an author far better known for his novel, *The Golden Ass*, than for any acute historical or philosophical insights: 'In the *palaestra* [wrestling facility] he [Plato] had Ariston from Argos as his teacher, and with his training Ariston brought him to such an advanced state that he competed in wrestling at the Pythian and Isthmian games.'¹³

The first similar accounts in Greek come even later, in the third century AD. One appears in the notoriously uncritical and unreliable Diogenes Laertius.¹⁴ The other comes from the equally uncritical Porphyrius, a fanatical student of the philosopher Plotinus but known mostly for his anti-Christian publications. Porphyrius, too, identifies Ariston of Argos as Plato's gymnastic teacher, then merely says: 'Some people say that Plato wrestled at the Isthmian and Pythian games.'¹⁵ Diogenes Laertius says almost the same thing: '[Plato's] wrestling teacher was Ariston of Argos; and there are people, such as Dicaearchus, who say Plato even participated in the Isthmian games.' Unfortunately, we cannot confirm his citation, for nothing of the work of Dicaearchus is extant, except for a few sentences quoted or paraphrased in later authors, such as Diogenes Laertius's remark about him here.

Yet even if Diogenes's attribution to Dicaearchus, a serious writer just a generation after Plato, were accurate and his statement true, we still would have no evidence whatsoever that Plato ever won an athletic prize anywhere. At the very most, all Dicaearchus said was that Plato competed in the Isthmian games, not that he won there. By Porphyrius' time then, the late third and early fourth centuries AD, hundreds if not thousands of works had been written about Plato, but no one had yet said a word about his winning an Olympic or any other victory. The comedy of errors is finally completed by the anonymous biographer of Plato, who is even much later than Porphyrius. Guthrie dates this anonymous biography to the sixth century AD, some 900 years after Plato.¹⁶ In those Dark Ages, the biographer's aim was more to write an interesting life of Plato than to seek historical truth. He therefore embellished Diogenes's tentative report of Isthmian participation into a certain report of Nemean, even Olympic, victory. After naming Ariston as Plato's coach, he writes: 'He won at two athletic games, the Olympics and the Nemeans.'¹⁷ In 1910, E.N. Gardiner swallowed this bait – hook, line, and sinker – adding imaginatively to the biographer's 'won the Nemeans and Olympics' additional victories in the Isthmian games and the Pythian games at Delphi. He thus gives us all a painful demonstration of how, in the hands of the careless or impetuous, for effect, participation is exaggerated into victory. Just as no one for almost a millennium after Plato's death knew of his Olympic and Nemean victories until some early medieval 'wizard' discovered them, so also the world went more than two millennia without knowing of Plato's Isthmian and Pythian victories until Gardiner found them in 1910. Some late ancient sources say he 'participated' in those games, but no one before Gardiner says he 'won' in them. So even if some, such as Harris, say Gardiner

'towers high above all others' in his field, and thus mislead accomplished scholars such as Guttmann, their views on Plato's entire athletic career should be rejected. Furthermore Brundage's 'great athlete' Plato should also be rejected, in order to clear the way for the legitimate ancient sources that do reveal the ancient Greeks attitudes' towards mind and body.¹⁸

In actual ancient Greek texts, I cannot find a word that would support, even in the abstract, the supposed concept of the well-rounded elite athlete-scholar. All the evidence suggests that in Greek society the foremost athletes and the foremost intellectuals were as clearly divided as in American society today. At most major American universities, the current inter-collegiate athletic system with respect to such sports such as basketball, football, and baseball is wholly hypocritical, muddled and frequently dysfunctional.¹⁹ In theory, college teams are for amateurs only, for students engaging in sports as a secondary activity in whatever time they can spare from their studies. In reality the main college athletic conferences are the minor leagues for the country's professional teams, with little, if any, relation to academe.²⁰ This dismal situation results, in part, from a false picture of the ancient Greeks. Maybe there was, in the first half of the last century, a tiny handful of American Rhodes Scholars who both accurately threw a football and excelled at history. But the very notion of 'big-time' national-champion-level college athletics in America is founded on an impossible contradiction, namely the 'student-athlete'. Familiarity with the actual texts of Plato, instead of the medieval lives of Plato, would make that brutally clear. Indeed, in the *Laws* Plato spells out the actuality – then (and now): 'An athlete who aims at an Olympic or Pythian victory . . . must train full time. He has no free time for any other activity.'²¹

If the image of the ancient Greek intellectual athlete is a pure myth, and a pernicious one, nevertheless something can still be learned from the Greeks of the period about the relative merits of 'body and mind'. My survey of the sources must be selective – there are hundreds of relevant passages. It will provide simply an overview, pointing out 'milestones' along the way. Greek authors did not remain constant in their views. They changed slowly but drastically over the centuries, unwittingly preparing the way for medieval Christianity's hostility toward the body, the end of ancient athletics and for many of the problems in the modern world of sport.

Any serious study of any aspect of Greek thought must start with Homer. Homer has some relevant doublets: for example, he may speak of someone's 'words and deeds' or note a man's value both 'on the battlefield and in counsel'. But body and mind, physical and mental, are not clearly delimited entities for Homer.²² Odysseus is hardly a student-athlete, but the mythological Odysseus, far more than any other historical Greek, seems to excel in both categories. His mental agility is emphasized in the epithets he attracts, such as *polymetis*, usually translated as 'wily' or 'resourceful'. It literally means 'with lots of smarts'. In addition, he wins the foot race in the athletic games of *Iliad* 23; and he wins the discus on the island of Phaeacia in *Odyssey* 8. I do not think that Homer himself would have understood the question if he had been asked which was more valuable, the mental or the physical. But arguably a passage in

his tale of the Phaeacian games suggests that physical excellence outranks mental achievement. Shipwrecked, Odysseus washes up on the shore of the mystical island of Phaeacia; there the local king befriends him and holds an athletic meeting in his honour. Near the end of the contests Laodamas, the king's son, noting Odysseus' strong build, invites him to join in the games himself: 'Come, you too, my foreign friend, participate in the athletic contests, if you know them at all. You look as if you know athletic games. So long as a man lives, he has no greater glory than what he wins with the strength of his hands and the speed of his feet.'²³

The weary traveller declines the invitation. Thereupon a rather cocky young Phaeacian taunts Odysseus for not competing, remarking that he does not think that Odysseus appears to know about athletic games and that he seems more like a sailor and travelling salesman. 'You don't look at all like an athlete to me.'²⁴ Provoked, Odysseus cannot let the taunt stand; he picks up the biggest discus in the whole pile, and creates a new Phaeacean record. He then triumphantly asks the Phaeacians if anyone wants to challenge him in boxing or wrestling. No Phaeacian picks up the challenge.²⁵ Laodamas's words about the supreme glory of athletic victory achieved with strength of hand or speed of foot appear to express real respect for the games, to contain genuine praise of athletics and place a high value on physical prowess. Other passages about athletic contests in Homer, or shorter references to them, all seem to regard athletics as a rather common but highly honourable and admirable activity.²⁶ Homer, far from denigrating bodily excellence, presents it as a valuable quality.

The author most closely associated with ancient athletics and the Olympic Games is the lyric poet Pindar, older contemporary of Aeschylus in the first half of the fifth century BC. He wrote poems to be presented with song and dance to celebrate athletic victories not only in the Olympics, but also in the other three prestigious festivals that made up the 'circuit', the Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean Games.²⁷ Nearly 50 of Pindar's *Epinicia* or 'victory odes' are extant, and they reveal much about their author's attitude toward athletics, physical and mental excellence and the place of athletics in his society. I would argue with confidence that Pindar represents the mainstream of archaic sentiment when he ranks physical/athletic excellence and mental/intellectual excellence equally, all on the same high plane. A key passage is in *Nemean* 6.1–5:

The race of men is one thing, that
of the gods, is another. . . . There is a total difference in power, so that
we are nothing – while the bronze
heaven remains the gods' secure seat
forever. *But* however – *we may be*
something like *the gods*, through
greatness – greatness of *mind* or greatness of *body*.²⁸

Pindar first stresses mortals' dismal power of performance compared to that of the eternal gods. Compared to them, mortals are nothing. The gods are powerful,

permanent and perfect. Mankind is generally ineffective at what it seeks to do, often makes errors and is mortal. Death is a dismal and effective reminder of mankind's true status. Then Pindar counters this extremely grim and pessimistic view of the human condition: 'But yet we may become something like the immortal gods through greatness, greatness of mind [Greek *nous*] or greatness of body.'²⁹ Although most of the time what man is and what man does amounts to 'nothing', there are moments when someone rises above his human limitation and does something the gods can do, a superb act of mind or of body. Pindar does not rank one above the other. The gods are perfect with respect to both, and nothing god-like could be second-rate. All forms of exceptional human excellence in poetry, athletics, politics or anything else – so long as they are truly extraordinary and truly excellent – are akin to the divine; and therefore of equal stature. Elsewhere Pindar sums up this state of affairs: 'Men become strong and wise through something divine.'³⁰ Though hardly expected in one and the same man, both physical and mental excellence touch on the divine and therefore are always to be highly treasured. In my view, this was the prevailing position in archaic and early classical Greece, the golden age of Greek athletics.³¹

Yet not long before Pindar wrote these words, his older contemporary, the philosopher Xenophanes, had gone off on a completely new tack. He pointedly downgraded physical achievements and claimed that intellectual achievements are far superior:

If a man wins *victory at Olympia*
with the speed of his feet ... [or wrestling
or boxing or any other event]
his fellow *citizens look up to him* in awe,
he is given a prominent seat of honour at public games,
and, at public expense, he receives *free board*
and a *large prize* which would be a treasure for him.³²
He would get all those things,
yet he is not as worthy as I am.
For my wisdom is better
than the strength of humans or horses.
... It is wholly unfair
*to rank strength above my wisdom.*³³

The first thing which Xenophanes belittles is what Homer praised first, swiftness of foot. And there is an unmistakable critical tone when he complains about the injustice of a system and culture that would rank physical strength over wisdom. It is probably true that many cities gave an athlete who won any of the 'circuit' games front-row seats at all public events and lifetime free board at public expense. Some apparently even gave victorious citizens cash prizes. And certainly in Xenophanes's time, as in most periods, Greek society was not prone to give dazzling prizes to its philosophers.

In consequence, it is no surprise that the rather philosophical tragedian, Euripides,³⁴ and other philosophers such as Socrates (as presented by Plato) and the sophistic teacher-orator Isocrates later repeated Xenophanes's complaint.³⁵ Socrates, on trial for 'corrupting the youth' and religious impiety, made his own

speech in his defence. The speech not only denied the charges, but also possessed an air of defiance, perhaps even arrogance. The jurors convicted him by a vote of 281 to 220.³⁶ The trial then entered its penalty phase. The law was that the prosecution proposed a penalty, and the convicted defendant made a counter-proposal. Each of the 501 jurors was compelled to choose one proposal or the other. They could not consider any compromise. The prosecution proposed the death penalty. Socrates makes a glib, unquestionably arrogant counter proposal:

There is nothing [no penalty] more fitting for such as man [as I] than *free board at public expense*. It is much more fitting than if some one of you *wins ... at the Olympics*. Because that person just *makes you* seem *blessed*, but *I cause you* to be blessed; besides the athlete does not need any support, whereas I do.³⁷

With these words, Socrates proposed that he be penalized by being given a lifetime of free meals at public expense, just as the city rewarded its athletic victors. And just like Xenophanes, he justified his position on the grounds that he did much more good for the citizens than the athletes did. This proposal was so flagrantly brazen that 80 of the jurors who had voted for his acquittal now voted for the death penalty.³⁸

Isocrates, the noted Athenian speech-writer, political commentator and highly successful professor, was roughly Plato's contemporary.³⁹ He too took his cue from Xenophanes's protest concerning society's misconception about the relative worth of athletes and intellectuals: 'I am astonished at how many cities decide that those who succeed in athletic competitions deserve greater rewards than those who, through mental exertion come up with something useful.'⁴⁰ In the first paragraph of his *Panegyricus*, Isocrates made the same complaint, that victorious athletes get 'sizeable rewards' whereas men like him 'are accorded no respect at all'.⁴¹

Isocrates seems not only envious but also critical of athletes. In yet another passage he repeats and elaborates on this by the banal complaint:

The strangest thing of all is this: that, while people would admit that the mind [Greek *psyche*] is more important than the body – even though they know this – they still approve of those who compete in athletics more than they do of those engaged in the pursuit of knowledge [philosophers]. And yet it is wholly illogical to glorify those who engage in a meaner activity more than those who practise something more important?⁴²

Though their words are slightly different, Isocrates's 'illogical' clearly equates broadly with Xenophanes's 'unfair'; both men considered themselves valuable intellectuals, highly beneficial to society, and they seem truly baffled and openly embittered by what they see as society's badly misplaced priorities in the matter of body relative to mind. Of more importance, however, is an innovation that Isocrates seems to be the first to make. As the converse of 'body' (*soma*) he replaces Pindar's 'mind' (*nous*) and Xenophanes' 'wisdom' (*sophia*) with the word *psyche*. This word *psyche* in later texts

by others is often translated as 'soul'; but just as often, perhaps, and regularly in Isocrates and Plato, it means 'mind' as well. Classicists regularly render it as I have here, 'mind'.⁴³ For it is clearly intended as the inclusive word for the seat of intelligence and all things mental as opposed to physical. But this replacing of *psyche*, soul/mind, for *nous*, which always meant 'mind', greatly impacted on later versions of the traditional topic of body versus mind; especially, as we shall eventually see below, when Christian theologians took from these philosophers their depreciation of the body and physical excellence.

Elsewhere in the speech quoted above, Isocrates accepted, even seemed to recommend, the practice of the conventional Greek education of the young, whereby a student received training in both physical exercise and the study of academic subjects such as literature and philosophy.⁴⁴ But, contrary to the purposes such passages often serve in modern sports history, Isocrates was not talking about Brundage's well-balanced 'true culture', where the superior athlete exhibits the 'marriage of fine arts and sport' and realizes 'the proud and happy condition of a sound mind in a sound body'. Rather, Isocrates was merely recognizing physical training for the young as part of a broad programme of education which both he and other Greeks generally called *paideia* and is called 'general education' in the American school system. He was not suggesting equality of status for mind and body. In fact, in the very same passage above, Isocrates insisted that the body is by nature inferior to the mind (*psyche*) and must be subservient to it.⁴⁵ Regrettably this idea, the body's subservient role, Christianity took to extremes. While not advocating this extremism, I stress the failure of many in the United States to make a distinction between Greek competitive athletics and physical exercise as part of a system of general education for children. Confusion of the two has produced a false notion that ancient Olympic athletes were also scholars.

Plato was the first to posit the incorporeality of the soul.⁴⁶ Yet with Isocrates he held that a person consisted of two parts – body and mind. He too generally called the latter *psyche*, which in Plato also is best translated 'mind'.⁴⁷ For clarity's sake, I continue the awkward translation, 'mind/soul.'

Plato comes the closest of any Greek to expressing the concept *mens sana in corpore sano* which Brundage and others cite. In summarized form here, in a long and complex section of the *Republic* (3.410–412), Plato says that the youth should be trained in both gymnastics and literary/artistic matters: 'Exclusive attention to physical prowess may make a man become brutish, like an animal; but exclusive attention to the mind may make him brittle and soft. The body and mind should be cultivated together.'⁴⁸ Commentators often cite this passage as proof of the Greeks' 'well-rounded' athletes, who balanced physical and mental training and skills. However Plato, like Isocrates, was speaking merely of the general public education of boys, not of the training of Olympic athletes. Those who cite this passage with reference to Olympic athletes err badly. They certainly seem unaware that Plato himself later made his position indisputable when he stated: 'An athlete aiming at Olympic or Pythian victory must train full-time; he has no time at all for anything else.'⁴⁹

Aristotle, Plato's most illustrious student, soon took a major step towards an eventual rejection of bodily excellence among the ancients. Perhaps he misunderstood those last remarks of Plato's. Whatever the truth of the matter, Aristotle was the first of a great many to view physical and intellectual training as enemies in constant confrontation. In his proposed educational system, students were never to be allowed to pursue physical training and academic studies in the same year – 'because the intellect and the body must not be worked hard at the same time, since the two kinds of exercise naturally counteract one another, exertion of the *body* being an *impediment* to the *intellect*, and exertion of the *intellect* an *impediment* to the *body*.'⁵⁰

This passage is crucial. Aristotle's strange notion that exercise of the body and of the mind are antithetical to one another caught on with some later authors⁵¹ and eventually led to a total denigration of athletes and athletics, preparing the way for what de Coubertin rightly called Christianity's 'hatred of the flesh'.⁵² There were some other earlier precedents, too, on which these later authors could draw. There was Isocrates's notion that the body should be subservient to the mind.⁵³ And a character in a fragment of a Euripidean play inveighed against athletes in the most pejorative terms: 'Of the myriad of evils throughout Greece, none is worse than the race of athletes . . . slaves to their jaws and bellies.' This attack continued: athletes are no good as soldiers, they sleep all the time, squander their easy money, and so on.⁵⁴ But, significantly, in conformity with the play's date (fifth century BC), even as he asserted the worthlessness of athletes, the speaker never thought to attack their mental capabilities. In other words, he does not assert that they were stupid.

All that changes after Aristotle's thesis that physical training is detrimental to mental training. By the time of the Roman Empire, the athletes' fall from their classical grace is complete. In one of his lectures the first century AD, author Dio Chrysostom depicted the classical philosopher Diogenes mocking the mental abilities of athletes at the Isthmian games: 'These useless men ought to be cut up and served at a banquet. . . . I really believe that athletes have less intelligence [*psyche*] than swine.'⁵⁵ And Galen, the highly respected second-century AD medical doctor, trying to dissuade young men from becoming athletes, wrote:

All natural blessings are either mental or physical. . . . Athletes have never even dreamed of anything mental. . . . They are so lacking in reasoning that they don't even know if they have a brain. . . . They cannot think logically at all – they are as mindless as dumb animals. . . . They lead lives like those of swine; except swine do not exercise to excess nor force food down their throats as athletes do.⁵⁶

Whether the athletes of the Roman Empire were different from earlier times, and significantly more stupid than those of Pindar's age, will never be known for certain. I can find no reliable evidence that athletes were ever noted for their intellects, at any time, even in archaic and classical ages, from the seventh to fourth centuries BC. Yet what is clear is that by the time of the Roman Empire the literary commonplace remarks concerning athletes, body and mind, had changed markedly. Parts of Galen's tirade against athletes' intelligence clearly matched that of Dio Chrysostom; perhaps

both follow a common source. Whatever the reasons, the worthlessness and stupidity of athletes have now become a literary cliché; whereas once Pindar and the greatest artists of Greece had found athletes a subject worthy of their most serious professional efforts. Pindar, it should be remembered, had suggested that some humans, such as athletes when performing at the highest level, might even become almost god-like. In contrast, Dio Chrysostom and Galen took delight in pointing out the superiority of animals to humans in such events as foot racing and combat sports.⁵⁷ They both in fact compared athletes to swine.

Such a comparison is an almost incalculable change from Homer's time, when he could say 'There is no greater glory for a man so long as he lives than what he wins with strength of his hands and speed of his feet [in the games].'⁵⁸ But Homer and Pindar lived in the days when all deeds of excellence – 'of body or of mind' – were treasured and before the body had fallen, in literature, at least, to the onslaught of the 'mind' (mind/soul).

Christianity pounced on these later authors' tirades against athletes and bodily excellence, and linked sport along with sex as bodily activities antithetical to the stated goal of all Christians, salvation of the soul. The *psyche* or 'soul', as early as Isocrates and Plato, had replaced mind as the counterpart of body; and the soul had an obviously distinctive religious value for Christians. The concept of the body's inferior status also had a strong religious value for Christianity, which saw the body as a major impediment to the eventual salvation of the soul. Thus the Greek philosophers' apparent jealousy of athletes over several subsequent centuries resulted not only in medieval man's depreciating athletic competition but also in a new kind of degradation of the body.

St Paul, after disparaging athletes in a metaphor, suggested that all Christians should do as he claimed he did: 'I maltreat my body and enslave it.'⁵⁹ The long arm of Greek philosophy may arguably be detected, too, in a remarkable early-Christian epitaph preserved in the *Greek Anthology*. In a one-line sentence, the deceased man himself apparently summed up his whole life speaking through the inscription on his gravestone: 'On behalf of Christ, I abused my body with a lot of pain.'⁶⁰ Bodily abuse even became an extolled way of life. In Scotland, the seventh-century monk Dryethelm spent much of his life, even in the freezing winter, immersed in a river, sometimes with the water right up to his chest. Dryethelm chose this inhospitable habitat, the Venerable Bede remarks, 'because of his strong desire to punish his body'. He believed that if he maltreated his body, he would surely improve his soul and be saved. So he practised this strange religious rite 'while he also fasted daily, right up to the day he died. Out of a desire for heavenly benefits he subjugated his aged body.'⁶¹

This is an extreme form of what many – including, as noted earlier, Pierre de Coubertin – have called medieval Christianity's 'hatred of the flesh'.⁶² Surely something of Christianity's hatred of the flesh contributed to an eighteenth-century rule at Princeton University, when the faculty forbade their students to play ball on the grounds that it was a 'low' activity.⁶³ As in much of ancient Greece, academe remained

hostile to sport until the privileged nineteenth-century English public schools breached Christianity's anti-athletic bias. The headmasters declared piously, if simplistically, that bodily exercise and athletic competition were praiseworthy so long as they were all dedicated to the glory of God.⁶⁴ Thus the English middle and upper classes decided to pursue sport – officially, at least – only as an activity subservient to purity of soul and religious piety. The cult of games became known in the schools as athleticism.⁶⁵

The leading exponent of this movement, generally known as 'Muscular Christianity,' was the clergyman Charles Kingsley.⁶⁶ One of Kingsley's lifelong friends and closest supporters was Thomas Hughes,⁶⁷ who wrote the novel *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. That book, according to de Coubertin himself, was not only the inspiration for his life's work but also his lifelong guide.⁶⁸ Hughes and de Coubertin shared a high regard for Kingsley and his work – and something approaching a misguided adoration for the educational system which they imagined Thomas Arnold had implemented at Rugby School. In reality, Arnold was not responsible for the age of athleticism, nor did he advocate sport as a major part of the school curriculum. The straight-backed, bronzed boys whom de Coubertin admired when visiting the English public schools were produced by a later generation of public schoolmasters, such as Edward Thring at Uppingham, Charles Vaughn at Harrow and Edward Lynch Cotton at Marlborough, to mention just a few among many.⁶⁹

Furthermore, de Coubertin probably never fully realized that an element of earlier Christianity's 'hatred of the flesh' survived in muscular Christianity and also flowered again in the amateur athletic movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Consequently, he did not hesitate to embrace them both.⁷⁰ Yet a lingering hatred of the flesh explains in part why the partisans of the amateur movement would warn others not to 'overvalue physical excellence and athletic performance', insisting there were 'more important things than athletics'; that athletics should be an activity practised only by boys and youths, since it was never to be ranked among 'serious pursuits' that adults might engage in; that a proper athlete would practise only an hour or two a day, and never use a coach.⁷¹ All this was necessary for what Isocrates had called 'the subservience of the body to the mind/soul'.⁷²

The continuing influence of Muscular Christianity, with its emphasis on the amateur ideal, is clearly seen in the person of the Scottish runner Eric Liddell in the 1924 Paris International Olympic Games. In an episode made famous by the motion picture *Chariots of Fire*, Liddell, lest he offend God, refused to run a race on Sunday. Also, in the motion picture at least, the British sprinter Abrahams, lest he offend the British Amateur Athletic Association, which he represented, was compelled to hide his coach in a hotel when their great moment took place on the stadium track. To understand fully both Liddell and Abrahams, a historical view of the entire history of the body-versus-mind controversy and the longevity of the influence of Greek philosophers is required. When I see *Chariots of Fire*, my own mind flashes back to Xenophanes, Plato, Aristotle and Galen – and even Dryethelm.⁷³ In the 'Preface' to his standard work, *Greek Athletics Sports and Festivals*, the influential Gardiner, outspoken advocate of nineteenth-century

amateurism, could still write (as if he had just put down his Aristotle) about the 'rival claims of body and of mind'.⁷⁴

There remain some important questions. First, if not from the ancient Greek Olympic ideal, where then did the phrase and idea of *mens sana in corpore sano* come from? And second, how did it come to be associated with the amateur and the modern Olympic movements? The answer to the first question is easy; it comes from a passage in Juvenal, the first-century AD Roman writer of satires. But Juvenal's subject matter in that passage has absolutely nothing to do with the Olympics or even athletics. The topic is, in fact, good and bad prayers.

Juvenal first denounces people's usual prayers for such things as power, fame, good looks and longevity. He provides hundreds of lines of poetry which gave specific examples of these foolish prayers (*Satires* 10.56–345). 'What then,' Juvenal asks, 'should we, all humans, pray for?' The answer comes almost immediately. If you feel you must pray, he says, you should merely pray for general good health: *orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano*, 'one should pray for a sound mind in a sound body.' That is all the *mens sana* passage is about: 'pray not to get sick, and not to go crazy.'⁷⁵ There is no more. The phrase has not the slightest relevance to the contexts in which people now cite it; least of all to athletes of Olympic class. Since the proponents of athleticism (and later of amateurism) found nothing in Greek literature about ancient athletes cultivating their minds (or souls) and their bodies equally, they needed to use something else from somewhere else to support their idealism. Inadequate as it was, Juvenal's old adage was apparently the best that they could find.⁷⁶

Yet who found it? Who first introduced to athletics this phrase, which originated in a context so wholly foreign to sport? The first occurrence I can find is in a 4 December 1861 speech of John Hulley,⁷⁷ founder of the Liverpool Gymnasium and co-founder, with C. Melly, of the Liverpool Athletic Club and the Liverpool Olympic Games of 1862. At that time Hulley chose Juvenal's *mens sana in corpore sano* as the official motto of this athletic club, and at the first Liverpool Olympics in 1862 he offered a special prize for the best written essay on the *mens sana* theme.⁷⁸ Juvenal's phrase soon spread beyond Liverpool.

By 1864 a newspaper could report: 'The motto which the Olympian Societies of Great Britain have universally adopted, points to the highest conception of humanity. To have *mens sana in corpore sano*.'⁷⁹ Several Olympian societies had been founded, all following the lead of Dr W.P. Brookes. In his Shropshire village of Much Wenlock, Brookes had started the entire pre-Coubertin British Olympic movement in 1860 when he transformed his annual Wenlock 'Olympian Games', a rather casual local event which he had started in 1850, into a formal institution, the Wenlock Olympian Society, replete with officers, charter, motto and periodic meetings.⁸⁰

In 1865 Hulley and Brookes, along with E. Ravenstein,⁸¹ founded the British National Olympian Association (NOA), and they organized a successful Olympiad in London, 1866. Later attempts at a series of NOA Olympiads failed, and they became little more than an extension of the Wenlock Games. Nevertheless, the enterprise so engaged Dr Brookes that he eventually proposed international Olympic Games and managed to

pass the torch to Pierre de Coubertin when the baron visited him and his Wenlock Olympics in 1890. But this is no place to review Brookes's influence on de Coubertin, nor that of Thomas Hughes or Kingsley, which is by now rather well known in Olympic scholarship. And the nexus of personal relationships that eventually links Hulley and de Coubertin is so complex that it would require a separate study.⁸²

I return to the Latin phrase, *mens sana*. That phrase was used not only by a few Olympian societies, such as those of Liverpool and Wenlock, but was also adopted by the Muscular Christianity movement, to which Hulley himself belonged; and was soon to be the catchphrase, always unattributed, in all parts of the British Olympic and amateur movements. Then it was embraced by de Coubertin and the international Olympic movement.

Brookes himself repeated the *mens sana* motto in a speech during de Coubertin's 1890 visit to Wenlock. The baron recalled that event in his published report of that visit, attributing it neither to Hulley nor to Brookes, but to Kingsley.⁸³ However, de Coubertin had already himself espoused this same catchphrase even before his Wenlock visit and at that time he still attributed it to 'the ancients'.⁸⁴ Perhaps his linking of sport, the maxim and the ancients all together contributed to the common notion that it was indeed a saying associated with ancient Olympic athletes.

De Coubertin quoted the *mens sana* dictum approvingly for some time, but by 1902 he seemed to believe that it had become so hackneyed and overused in both schools and public speeches that it had become more amusing than effective.⁸⁵ He eventually rejected *mens sana* altogether as far too bland, and replaced it in his own and the official Olympic philosophy with *mens fervida in corpore lacertoso*, which means something like 'a fiery (or passionate) mind in a muscular (or powerful) body'.⁸⁶ In 1917 Coubertin himself rendered his new Latin aphorism as 'un esprit ardent en un corps entraîné', which John Dixon translates as 'an ardent mind in a trained body'.⁸⁷ Coubertin vigorously defended his *mens fervida* motto, saying it was carefully designed and researched.⁸⁸ Yet as Brundage proved by his remarks with which this article began, Coubertin failed in his attempt to replace *mens sana* with *mens fervida* in the Olympic rhetoric.

One final question remains: what was the origin of the saying *mens sana*? If the young John Hulley was indeed the first to launch the *mens sana* tradition in modern athletic contexts, he probably did not know it came from Juvenal. Hulley's only education was in the local Liverpool Collegiate Institution, and he concentrated on physical education.⁸⁹ Even if he learned some Latin, Juvenal's *Satires* were not often read in the classroom, and anyone who had first seen the *mens sana* phrase in its original context was unlikely to apply it to a topic so unrelated as sport.

Hulley might well have read Henry Fielding's prominent novel of the previous century, *The History of Tom Jones*. Latin quotations abound in Fielding's work. Unlike the sportsmen who later used the phrase, Fielding quoted the entire sentence: *orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano*, clearly recognizing that Juvenal's sentence concerned prayer not sports. In Fielding's novel, the adage well suited its context, referring to mental health, not physical training.⁹⁰ *Tom Jones* was a widely

read novel. Even if Hulley had not read any of the book himself, the words *mens sana in corpore sano* could have been ringing in the ears of many Englishmen at the time unattached to any author.

The history of the adage *mens sana* in relation to modern sport reveals an ironic change. The earlier heralds of this Latin phrase, such as Hulley and Brookes, quoted it at a time when sport was still frowned upon by church and school and the hatred of the flesh still reigned in academe. They certainly used the words *mens sana in corpore sano* with an emphasis on the *corpus*, seeking to justify attention to the body in a world that had focused for centuries most of its attention on the soul (mind) to the virtual repudiation of the body.⁹¹

De Coubertin, too, used the phrase to encourage acceptance of physical training, to which he had an almost messianic commitment. But by his time, the advocates of amateurism were already starting to transform the Muscular Christians' and de Coubertin's intent by quoting the same maxim for the opposite purpose. Fearing that too much, not insufficient, value was being accorded to sport and physical achievement, the champions of amateurism rejoined the ancient Greek philosophers in warning that physical excellence should be 'kept in its place' and subservient to serious adult pursuits.⁹² As Gardiner put it, 'Sport is too often pursued as an end in itself.' Even when speaking of fifth-century classical Greece, still the 'Golden Age', he judged that there was an 'excessive prominence given to bodily excellence and athletic success'.⁹³ Gardiner accepted the medieval nonsense about Plato's athletic success, and even invented additional victories for him. He wanted to make sure that athletic excellence was not valued unless there was an equal (or greater) amount of mental achievement to balance it. So he chose as the ideal athlete a man far more famous as an intellectual luminary. Brundage spoke of a 'well rounded' culture, 'both physical and mental training' – because he believed that physical excellence in itself had relatively little worth. Nevertheless, whether the *mens sana* phrase is used to promote the body or to demote it, it has been misused in all contexts relative to sport. It was originally a call neither to academic nor to sporting excellence, but to health.

Juvenal's adage is indeed a charming old adage, but wholly unsuited to the purposes for which it is now employed. In antiquity, there was nothing at all about the mind associated with athletics or the Olympic Games. The notion that such big bruisers as the ancient wrestler Milo were somehow akin to our fictitious scholar-athletes is just another Olympic myth; it is unclaimed baggage left behind by the myth of Greek amateur athletics.

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Notes

- [1] Avery Brundage, 'Why the Olympic Games?' in Asa Bushnell (ed.), *Report of the United States Olympic Committee; Games of the XIVth Olympiad, London, England, 1948*, n.p., n.d. [New York, 1949?], United States Olympic Association, pp.21–6 (23).
- [2] Pierre de Coubertin (Norbert Müller, ed.), *Textes Choisis*, 3 vols. (Zurich: Weidmann, 1968), Vol.1, p.121. De Coubertin later attributed the same saying to Charles Kingsley (see further discussion of de Coubertin's use of this phrase near the end of this article).
- [3] Virtually all who quote the *mens sana* concept apply it to the 'Golden Age' of Greek athletics (sixth to fourth centuries BC), while viewing the period after that as characterized by rather depraved, mentally deficient athletes. No one explains why the ancient Greek athletes and Olympic officials would express their motto in Latin. Peter Lindsay, however, says the dictum applies to the later, Roman, period mainly, I assume, because it is Latin, not Greek: 'As Roman minds began to appreciate the more liberal forms of exercise ... Philosophers ... began to explore the dictum of *mens sana in corpore sano*.' Peter L. Lindsay in Earle Zeigler (ed.), *A History of Sport and Education to 1900* (Champaign, IL: Stipes Publishing Co., 1973), p.181. Lindsay thus reverses the timetable that others see. Although Lindsay's version accounts for the Latin, his statement is also false.
- [4] See first paragraph, with note 1, above.
- [5] I know of no other author, ancient or modern, who claims Isthmian participation for Socrates. Guttman, too careful a scholar to invent anything, perhaps confused the reports of Plato's Isthmian participation (below) with Socrates, or misread Harris's statement that Socrates once 'went to see the Isthmian games' (H.A. Harris, *Greek Athletes and Athletics* [London: University of Indiana Press, 1964], p.134) to mean that he participated.
- [6] Allen Guttman, *From Ritual to Record* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), p.23.
- [7] See David C. Young, *The Olympic Myth of Greek Amateur Athletics* (Chicago, IL: Ares, 1984). There, I sometimes must point out Gardiner's egregious errors (e.g. p.84, n.80). His scholarship was further vitiated by his tendentious and mistaken preconception that Greek athletics were closely paralleled by nineteenth-century British sport (Young, *The Olympic Myth*, p.76. n.72). However, Gardiner deserves great credit for collecting many ancient sources and thus making one of the most valuable contributions to the history of Greek sport.
- [8] Harris, *Greek Athletes and Athletics*, p.20.
- [9] Plato's father was named Ariston and, according to the biographies discussed below, his coach was named Ariston. But the two are not the same man. These biographies (Apuleius I.2.184, Diogenes Laertius, Olympiodorus) clearly state that the Ariston who was his coach was from the city of Argos, not Athens; but Apuleius also states that Plato's father was from an old Athenian family, tracing its roots back through the Athenian king Codrus (I.1.180). There are clearly two different Aristons, which was a common enough name. Gardiner compounds his errors by attributing a wholly fictitious athletic career to his composite Ariston who, he says, 'was a distinguished athlete' (which seems unattested for either Ariston).
- [10] E.N. Gardiner, *Greek Athletic Sports and Festivals* (London: Macmillan, 1910), p.128.
- [11] The author is anonymous, and the text found only in an appendix to a now obscure edition of a rather obscure author (see note 17, below).
- [12] W. Rudolph, 'Zu den Formen der Berufsport zur Zeit des Poliskrise', in E.C. Welskopf (ed.), *Hellenische Poleis*, (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1974), Vol.3, pp.1472–83 (1475–7).
- [13] Apuleius, *De Dogmate Platonis*, 1.2 (184)
- [14] Diogenes Laertius, 3.4; the wording suggests that he and Apuleius might have worked from a common source.
- [15] Porphyrius, frag. 14, p.13, second edition.

- [16] '[T]he earliest extant life [of Plato] is by Apuleius in the second century AD, who followed the earlier encomiasts in making his subject a typical hero-figure. Not much later is [the life] of Diogenes Laertius, and finally we have the sixth century lives by ... Olympiodorus and an anonymous author, who carry the supernatural element to even further lengths.' W.C.K. Guthrie, *Plato, the Man and his Dialogues, Earlier Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p.9. This anonymous life (with the 'supernatural element') is the only life to mention any athletic victories (Olympiodorus is silent about them).
- [17] The full Greek text is printed in Rudolph, 'Zu den Formen,' p.1476, where he cites the 'Anonymous Life; appendix to Cobet's edition of Diogenes Laertius, pp.6, 40ff.' I can find no other reference to the 'Cobet' edition nor another version of the relevant text.
- [18] Plato was not the only famous author to be crowned an Olympic victor posthumously many centuries after his death. Euripides, too, has this signal honour. A late biographer of Euripides, as part of a fanciful tale about an oracle, says that Euripides won an athletic victory in the games at Athens (Mary Lefkowitz, *Lives of the Greek Poets* [Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981], pp.93–4). Therefore Paschal Grousset (Phillipe Daryll), in a by now familiar kind of embellishment, remarked that Euripides was 'an Olympic victor' (Phillipe Daryll [pseudonym], *Renaissance Physique* [Paris, 1888], pp.255–6). Grousset was no doubt de Coubertin's source when he himself wrote: 'Euripide avait été champion du pugila' (De Coubertin, *Textes Choisis*, Vol.2, p.35, n.2. All these claims are no doubt false. Had Euripides been a champion boxer, it is impossible that scores of authors for many centuries would not know that biographical detail, yet a writer at the end of antiquity had access to authentic information about his boxing feats.
- [19] See Ronald A. Smith, *Sports and Freedom: The Rise of Big-time College Athletics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), especially pp.163–174 ('Amateur College Sport: An Untenable Concept in a Free and Open Society'; and Smith's more recent 'Intercollegiate Athletics/Football History,' *Journal of Sport History*, 29 (2002), 230–40; Walter Byers, *Unsportsmanlike Conduct: Exploiting College Athletes* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1995).
- [20] American collegiate athletes must pass some minimal academic tests to be eligible, but some must take those tests several times in order to pass (a few never pass). All must attend classes; but the courses which most (not all) football, baseball and basketball players take are not part of the traditional academic curriculum. Many athletes never graduate, some because they fail, others because they join professional teams before they finish college. Many who do graduate are poorly educated, as is obvious from the sub-standard English that they speak when interviewed by the media.
- [21] Plato, *Laws* 807C. Everyone knows that such full-time devotion to training is necessary for victory in today's Olympics; and the same is required of college athletes at US 'Division 1A'schools if they seek a divisional or national championship.
- [22] See, for example, Bruno Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953).
- [23] Homer, *Odyssey* 8.143–235 (Laodamas's words on athletic glory: 145–8). Although these words would apply to military excellence as well, in their context they unmistakably include athletics.
- [24] *Ibid.*, 8.159–64.
- [25] *Ibid.*, 8.204–55.
- [26] See my *Olympic Myth*, pp.111–12.
- [27] The four athletic festivals that made this 'circuit' were valued more than the others; it therefore seems similar to the 'majors' of today's golf or tennis. Modern scholars sometimes call the games of the circuit 'the Big Four'.
- [28] Pindar, *Nemean* 6.1–5 (emphases added).

- [29] ‘But yet’ – the Greek here is dramatically unusual; there are two adversative conjunctions, two words usually translated as ‘but’ where ordinarily only one appears and is enough. The effect of the double adversative is to put extreme emphasis on how what follows counteracts or compensates for the pessimism that has just gone before.
- [30] Pindar, *Olympian* 9.29–30. The word which I render as ‘strong’ here (*agathos*) is a rather general word often translatable merely as ‘good’. But in Pindar the word still has the physical overtones that it inherited from its earlier use in martial contexts. That it essentially means ‘strong’ here is further proved by its pairing in this doublet with ‘wise’ (*sophos*).
- [31] There were other outstanding poets, such as Simonides and Bacchylides, who wrote poems in praise of athletic victory. And artists of this time, both plastic and graphic, found athletics a worthy, even especially attractive subject for serious art. The number of vase paintings that portrayed athletic scenes was far greater in Pindar’s age and that just before him than at any other period of antiquity.
- [32] The exact nature of the prize is not specified; but in the sixth century BC Xenophanes probably saw athletes receiving huge amounts of money as prizes. I conclude that for the following reasons: (1) the word here, *doron* (‘gift’), is often used to refer to a large sum of money, such as a major fee or (especially) bribe; (2) sixth-century BC Athens, at least, had a law granting its athletic victors prizes of very large sums of money (Plutarch, *Solon* 23; Diogenes Laertius, 1.55; see Young, *Olympic Myth*, pp.128–33; cf. 115–127); (3) two Greek cities in sixth-century Italy reportedly (Athenaeus, 12.522a–c) offered large cash prizes for victory in their games; (4) Xenophanes’s word ‘treasure’ (*keimelion*) is used for expensive items such as gold ingots, bronze tripods, silver bowls and costly garments that only the wealthy are likely to have, especially by inheritance (see my *Olympic Myth*, p.132).
- [33] Xenophanes, 2.1–14.
- [34] An unnamed character in Euripides frag. 282 (Nauck), after ranting and railing against athletes in general, attacks the Greek custom of honouring such ‘worthless’ men: ‘We should rather crown people who are wise (*sophoi*), and people who are good, whoever best leads the city prudently and justly.’ Yet elsewhere another of his characters says: ‘I would like to be first in the athletic games, but take a secondary place in the city’ (*Hippolytus* 1016–17). Thus both points of view appear in Euripides’ plays, while the playwright himself may have adhered to neither.
- [35] Plato, *Apology* 36d–e; Isocrates, *Epistola* 8.5; Isocrates, *Antidosis* 250.
- [36] In order to reduce the likelihood of bribery, Athenian law required juries numbered in the hundreds. Very few defendants could afford to bribe 501 jurors.
- [37] Plato, *Apology* 36d–e (emphases added).
- [38] Diogenes Laertius (2.41) reports the result of the jury’s vote.
- [39] Isocrates (born 436 BC) was older than Plato (born 428), but survived him by several years, living well into his nineties. Since their literary activities span approximately the same years, it is difficult to determine whether a specific work of the one antedates or follows a specific work of the other. That question does not affect my argument here, but since the older Isocrates was the first of the two to open a school, I proceed as if he antedated Plato.
- [40] Isocrates, *Epistola* 8.5.
- [41] Isocrates, *Panegyricus* 1.
- [42] Isocrates, *Antidosis* 250.
- [43] Norlin’s Loeb edition, for example, translates *psyche* in this passage as ‘mind’ (George Norlin [ed. and transl.], *Isocrates: Speeches and Letters*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; Loeb Classical Library, 1966–8), 2.323.
- [44] Isocrates, *Antidosis* 181–2.
- [45] ‘It is generally agreed that the nature of man consists of two parts, body (*soma*) and mind/soul (*psyche*). And everyone would agree that of these two the mind/soul is superior and worth

- more. The business of the mind/soul is to make plans in each sphere, the business of the body to serve the thoughts of the mind/soul.' (Isocrates, *Antidosis* 181–2).
- [46] See Robert Renehan, 'Greek Origins of the Concepts of Incorporality and Immateriality', *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*, 21 (1980), 105–38 (esp.129–33).
- [47] In fact Plato seemed to view Pindar's 'mind' (*nous*) and Xenophanes' 'wisdom' (*sophia*) as components of the *psyche*: 'Mind and wisdom (*nous* and *sophia*) cannot exist without the mind/soul (*psyche*).' Plato, *Philebus* 30C.
- [48] Plato, *Republic* 3.410–412. In this passage Plato distinguished pure intellect (*dianoia*, see n.50, below) from the more generic word *psyche*, which encompassed all the mental, non-physical elements of a person.
- [49] Plato, *Laws* 807C.
- [50] Aristotle, *Politics* 1339a–b (emphases added). The word I translate 'intellect' is neither *nous* nor *psyche*, but *dianoia* (above, n.48), which comes closer to *nous* than to *psyche*. The standard Greek dictionary translates *dianoia* in these contexts as 'thinking faculty, intelligence, understanding' (George Liddell, Robert Scott and Henry Jones [eds.], *A Greek-English Lexicon* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996], p.405).
- [51] Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* 7.11; Galen, *Exhortation to Medicine* 10–12.
- [52] De Coubertin, *Textes Choisis*, Vol.2, p.92.
- [53] Isocrates, *Antidosis* 181–2.
- [54] Euripides frag. 282 Nauck (from the lost play *Autolykus*). A character in a play need not express the playwright's personal opinion.
- [55] Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* 7.11.
- [56] Galen, *Exhortation to Medicine* 10–12.
- [57] Elsewhere Dio Chrysostom claimed that a 'hare or a deer' could outrun the Olympic sprint victor, yet 'they are the most cowardly of animals' (*Oration* 8.14). Galen remarked that if animals were to compete, a horse would win the distance race, and a bull be crowned in boxing (*Exhortation to Medicine* 12).
- [58] Homer, *Odyssey* 8.145–8.
- [59] I *Corinthians* 9.24. The verb which I translate as 'maltreat', *hypopiazō*, means 'to strike so as to bruise'. It originally meant to inflict a black eye on a person, and usage then extended, as a metaphor, to all kinds of physical abuse (Liddell et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p.1904).
- [60] *Greek Anthology* 8.159.
- [61] Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* 5.12.
- [62] De Coubertin, *Textes Choisis*, Vol.2, p.92.
- [63] The essence of the lengthy rule was: 'It appearing that a play at present much practiced . . . with balls and sticks in the back commons of the college is itself low and unbecoming gentlemen students, and inasmuch as it is an exercise attended with great danger to the health . . . the faculty think it incumbent on them to prohibit both the students and the grammar scholars from using the play aforesaid' – quoted in Jennie Holliman, *American Sports (1785–1835)* (Durham, NC: Seeman Press, 1931), pp.64–5.
- [64] The reality was far more complex. For an informative discussion of this complexity, see J.A. Mangan and James Walvin, 'Social Darwinism and Upper Class Education in Late Victorian and Edwardian England', in J.A. Mangan (ed.), *Manliness and Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800–1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), pp.135–59.
- [65] For the widely-recognized definitive study of this period of athleticism, see J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: The Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2000).
- [66] For the origin of the term see Guy Kendall, *Charles Kingsley and his Ideas* (New York: Haskell House, 1973; reprint of 1947 edition), pp.177–8.

- [67] John MacAloon, *This Great Symbol* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p.75; Kendall, *Charles Kingsley*, pp.19, 45, 81.
- [68] See, for example, MacAloon, *This Great Symbol*, pp.198, 52–3, 59–82, 303, 304, n.260; Richard Mandell, *The First Modern Olympics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1976), pp.57–60.
- [69] See J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: the Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), chapters 2 and 3.
- [70] De Coubertin accepted amateurism more for convenience than for the sake of principle. In 1931 he wrote: ‘Amateurism! Here it was again – the same old question. . . . Personally, I wasn’t particularly concerned about it. Today I can admit it; the question [of amateurism] never really bothered me. . . . Realizing the importance attached to it in sports circles, I always showed the necessary enthusiasm, but it was an enthusiasm without real conviction’ – de Coubertin, *Olympic Memoirs* (Lausanne: IOC, 1979), p.65 (anonymous English translation of *Mémoires olympiques* (Lausanne: Bureau international de pédagogie sportive, 1931). He nevertheless successfully feigned true belief; see my *Modern Olympics*, pp.131, 141 and esp.212, n.2.
- [71] The first two quotations come from Gardiner, *Greek Athletic Sports and Festivals*, p.4, and Harris, *Greek Athletes and Athletics*, p.114, respectively. I cite just three of the many passages in which the proponents of amateurism revealed their disdain for athletes and athletics. An anonymous author in *The Spectator* deplored the coming revival of the Olympic Games at Athens in 1896: ‘What stirs us to remonstrance is not the whim [revival of Olympics], but the absurd importance given to it by the newspapers’ (‘The Latest Athletic Whim,’ 23 June 1894, 851–2). The noted American classicist Paul Shorey wrote: ‘Diagoras [Olympic boxing victor, 464 BC] is clearly a professional. He makes the business of his life what should be the play of his youth’ (‘The Spirit of Greek Athletics,’ *The Chautauquan*, January 1910, 255–73). In his official ‘Olympic Speech,’ at the Greek National Olympic Games, Athens 1870, Philip Ioannou (first and foremost exponent of amateurism in Greece) said: ‘The useful arts should be valued ahead of demonstrations of physical dexterity’ (*Olympiakos Logos*, Athens, 1870) – see my *Olympic Myth*, p.32, n.35. For more anti-athletic comments of those advocating amateurism (including the denunciation of coaches) see my *The Olympic Myth*, pp.44–9, and David C. Young, *The Modern Olympics: A Struggle for Revival* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p.190, n.28.
- [72] See note 45 above.
- [73] See above discussion of the Greek philosophers.
- [74] Gardiner, *Greek Athletic Sports*, p.vii.
- [75] Juvenal, *Satires* 10.356.
- [76] For the total absence of amateurism, the word and even the concept, from ancient athletics and the ancient Olympics, see my *The Olympic Myth*.
- [77] Hulley may not have been the first to quote the phrase in an athletic context. De Coubertin once attributed it to Kingsley; Hulley and Kingsley were contemporaries, and shared some of the same friends. If Kingsley anticipated Hulley, it makes no difference to my argument. Hulley’s speech is reprinted in Shropshire Olympian Society (ed.), *Opinions of Eminent Men on the Importance of Physical Education* (1863), p.5. There is a copy in Brookes’s papers Vol.4, p.139. The papers of W. P. Brookes are preserved in seven large scrapbooks (or volumes) owned and kept by the Wenlock Olympian Society in the Village of Much Wenlock, Shropshire. For further details see my *Modern Olympics*, pp.172–5.
- [78] Most of my information on the Liverpool games comes from Anette Keuser, ‘Die Geschichte der “Liverpool Olympics” (1862–1867)’, unpublished *Hausarbeit (für Lehrämter)*, Deutsche Sporthochschule, Cologne, 1991; much can now be found in Chapter 3 of my *Modern Olympics*. There is a short but generally accurate account (pp.79–80) of the Liverpool

- Olympics in Gerald Redmond, 'Toward Modern Revival of the Olympic Games: The Various "Pseudo-Olympics" of the 19th Century', in Jeffrey O. Segrave and Donald Chu (eds.), *The Olympic Games in Transition* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1988, pp.71–87.
- [79] *Shrewsbury Chronicle*, 9 Sept. 1864.
- [80] See my *Modern Olympics*, pp.8–12, 24–8.
- [81] Brookes and Hulley were friends. Brookes attended the 1865 opening of Hulley's new gym, and Hulley was an honorary member of Brookes' Wenlock Olympian Society. There is new information on Ravenstein: see now Don Anthony, 'The National Olympian Triumvirate – The Third Man', *Journal of Olympic History*, 10 (Dec. 2001/Jan. 2002), 62–5.
- [82] Hughes was an admirer of Hulley (Don Anthony, 'The Roots of Modern Olympism and the Mystery of John Hulley,' *Journal of Olympic History*, 9 [Winter 2001], 13–18 [15]); he was also an associate of Kingsley (MacAloon, *This Great Symbol*, p.78). De Coubertin was a strong admirer of Hughes, and heavily influenced by Brookes, as well – who was an associate of Hulley's (see my *Modern Olympics*, pp.33–5, 69, 74–83).
- [83] 'Les jeux olympiques à Much Wenlock', *La Revue Athlétique*, 1 (Dec. 1890), 705–13, 706 (reprinted in de Coubertin, *Textes Choisis*, Vol.2, p.79).
- [84] 'L'éducation Anglais,' *Réforme Sociale*, 3 (1887), 633–48 (642) (reprinted in de Coubertin, *Textes Choisis*, Vol.1, p.151): 'Le sport ... *mens sana in corpore sano*, disaient les anciens.'
- [85] *Le Figaro*, 21 Aug. 1902, 1–2 (reprinted in de Coubertin, *Textes Choisis*, Vol.3, p.335)
- [86] First in *Revue olympique*, July 1911, 99–100 (reprinted in de Coubertin, *Textes Choisis*, Vol.1, p.603).
- [87] De Coubertin, *Almanach olympique pour 1918* (Lausanne, 1917) (reprinted in de Coubertin, *Textes Choisis*, Vol.2, p.446). He again argued for *mens fervida* instead of *mens sana* in his 1915 report to the Minister of Education (*Textes Choisis*, Vol.3, p.420).
- [88] De Coubertin, *Textes Choisis*, Vol.2, p.455 (1929); also in Carl-Diem Institut (ed.), *The Olympic Idea*, transl. John G. Dixon (Stuttgart: Hoffman, 1967), p.61.
- [89] Anthony, 'The Roots of Modern Olympism', 15.
- [90] While Tom Jones and Mr Partridge were travelling together, Tom displayed some odd behaviour. Partridge said: 'Poor gentleman! *orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano*,' as if to acknowledge that Jones had probably gone mad (Henry Fielding, *History of Tom Jones, A Foundling*, Book 12, Part 4 [first edition, 1749]; the English word 'sane' comes from this Latin adjective, *sanus, -a, -um*, 'healthy').
- [91] See above discussion of Hulley and others who used the term before 1870.
- [92] Those arguing for amateurism disingenuously cited the need for proportion. Amateurism also, however, limited the number of competitors and ensured that athletes of the working class could not enter. Had those athletes won, the gentleman amateurs of the middle and upper social orders would have lost their dignity, to some extent even their identity. Occasionally arguments on behalf of amateurism suggested that such matters were the true cause. An 1880 editorial in *The Times* of London strongly advocated the exclusion of working-class athletes in order to make sure that the valuable prizes at amateur meets (still allowed in 1880) would 'fall into the right hands' – otherwise there would be an unacceptable 'redistribution of wealth' (Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England* [London: Routledge, 1978], p.135). Gardiner candidly wrote: 'When the rewards of success are sufficient, there arises a professional class, and when professionalism is once established the amateur can no longer compete with the professional.' The perceptive de Coubertin saw the principal aim of the amateur rules – still in effect in 1931: 'What is an event "open to all comers"? To understand it, one has to go back to sporting life and customs in England some fifty years ago. In actual fact, it [the amateur rule] is a form of social protection, a relic of the class system' (*Olympic Memoirs*, p.66).
- [93] Gardiner, *Greek Athletic Sports*, pp.5–6 and 4 respectively.