

Old Greek ideal of *kalokagathia* and its examples in the contemporary world. A reminiscence of the beautiful, good and wise

associate professor – Halina Zdebska-Biziewska

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Summary:

The crisis of traditional values in the contemporary world is becoming a serious social problem of global range. New values appear and displace the ones that we regard as timeless and universal. The values which were originally located in men involve the commonly known ones which are included in the basic categories of ethics – truth, goodness and beauty. Unfortunately, in present times, traditional values seem to lose to the unreflectively popular trend of success and being “cool”, fit and trendy. More and more often, anxiety appears regarding shaping a type of a man of one dimension or a man of narrow specialisation or a man of a civilisation of death. Is the old Greek ideal of a versatile personality possible in the contemporary world, is it desired and where do we look for its embodied examples? The present work is an attempt to provide an answer to this question on the basis of the examples of the Polish “*KalosKagathos*” distinction as well as the versatile personality of Halina Zdebska-Biziewska (1960-2018).

Key words: *kalokagathia*, “*KalosKagathos*”, Halina Zdebska-Biziewska, personality, values, social capital.

Introduction

In the recent years, the level of individualism and narrow specialisation has been rising in almost all the spheres of life, from sport to medicine. New values appear and displace the ones that we regard as timeless and universal. Nowadays, new trends are becoming popular, such as trends of success, being “cool”, fit and trendy and a new cultural ideal is popular, an ideal of personality of a man of the “civilization of death” (Pope John Paul II). More and more often, anxieties appear regarding the personality of man of one dimension or of narrow specialisation. In the contemporary world, a versatile personality according to the pattern of the Old Greek *kalokagathia* seems to be impossible, although, as Kazimierz Doktor writes “dignified future life requires a dignified and versatile personality” (Doktor 2002: 168). Thus, it seems that promoting values related to the Old Greek idea of *kalokagathia* becomes an urgent and socially desirable need. It is commonly known that a “word” written or spoken can act more efficiently than a two-edged sword¹, however, the examples of individual people make up a motive power in shaping and changing attitudes, also towards values. These are the values located

mainly in man which are a signpost of acting and evoking moral awareness (sensitivity) in other people. It is possible “thanks to the type of examples and the method of their analysis” and it “shows us such dimensions of ethical experience which we normally do not perceive (...). However, what man does with the opportunities, which he can understand, depends on what kind of man he is” (Winch 1990: 34). By contrast, a versatile man of the embodied example of *kaloskagathos*, besides goodness and beauty, involves such virtues as vigour, generosity, wisdom, honour, honesty, responsibility, spiritual perfection and proper ethical attitude in daily routine. It is worth noting that the earlier listed virtues and e.g. justice, kindness, loyalty, culture, friendship or respect, make for a “conglomerate of features providing a foundation of sport ethics, to which the rule of fair play directly relates” (Zdebska-Biziewska 2014a: 14). Both the laureates of the award of “*KalosKagathos*” and Professor Halina Zdebska-Biziewska obeyed the rule of fair play, both in sport and in life beyond sport. Similarities between *kalokagathia* and the main principle of olympism is beautifully expressed in the sentence: “Plato’s ideal of *kalokagathia* makes up a bridge between ancient times and Coubertin’s vision of olympism to which, the mod-

¹ Cit. on the basis of the Millennium Bible: “For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing the division of soul and spirit, or joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:1).

ern olympic movement relates" (Zdebska 2008: 83). Is, thus, the Old Greek ideal of *kalokagathia* present in the contemporary world and where can we find its embodied examples? In the present work, I attempt to answer these questions.

The tradition of Kalokagathia

"Although the word *kalos* in ancient Greek expressed beauty and *agathos*, meaning goodness, the meanings of the notions were not the same for all Greeks. The heroes of Homer (2008), particularly those shown in the *Iliad*, are teachers of the good and beautiful life, and they are also figures² to whom not only the notions of *kalos* and *agathos* but also the knightly *ethos* is referred. The *Iliad* is an epos telling the story of mostly bravery, devotion and gallantry of the knightly elite, in which each of the knights is presented together with his noble ancestors. The origin of the term "*kalos*" can regard the notion of decency and the man named *Kallias*³, about whom Herodotus (2005) wrote that he deserves to be frequently mentioned. In *Symposium*, the famous dialogue of Plato, the word *Agathon* refers to the host's name and his goodness and wealth. It can be interpreted that wealthy people who were good were *kalokagathos*. However, this wealth can be understood as personal virtues, involving sport talents. However, a man himself can be *Agathoi*⁴ - dignified by activities visible through the virtue of *arete*, which is explained as perfection and which, according to Socrates, determines spiritual beauty.

Kalokagathis cannot be spoken about without reference to Plato, in the thought of whom, twenty-five centuries ago, the ideal of versatile perfection in shaping both the body and spirit was born. These words sound particularly accurate: "There is no body that has in itself as much of godlike elements as wings. And the godlike element[s] are beauty, goodness, and reason, and all the like things. That is the food for the feathers of the soul which grow the fastest, and which waste away and disappear because of moral laxity" (Plato 1993: 36). It can be assumed that Aristocles (the real name of Plato) was the first *KalosKagathos* man, who not only practiced poetry, painting and music, but was also successful in sport games. It is worth mentioning that the pattern to follow and personification of harmony of body and spirit

in Greek education was the Homeric Achilles as well as Hippocrates, known as the father of medicine, who was also an athlete in his youth (Lipoński 2012). However, the ideal of *kalokagathia*, which combined truth, goodness, and beauty, has never been fully realised (Lipiec 1988), and even if it embodied itself, this was only for a short while in view of contradictions within different directions of development (Morrou 1965).

The ideal of versatile perfection became a foundation of lasting values, which the Greek agonistics incorporated into general human culture (Biliński 1956). *Kalokagathia* was the philosophical base of modern Olympism, and the creative continuator of the idea of harmony between body and spirit was Baron Pierre de Coubertin. Krzysztof Zuchora, who has been propagating the Olympic message for years, writes that Coubertin's Olympism "referred to the ancient philosophy preaching invariably the appreciation of truth, goodness and beauty, justice and valour" (Zuchora 2013: 6). The ideals of the ancient Hellas became the foundation of European culture and always accompanied the Olympic Games, and the idea of Olympic sport was unification (Lipiec 1988).

"*KalosKagathos*" in Poland⁵

The originator of the award that promotes people who skilfully combine sport and non-sport related achievements was the then editor-in-chief of *Tempo* magazine in Kraków, Ryszard Niemiec. Together with the rector of the Jagiellonian University, Józef Gierowski, they worked out the conception of the distinction, which was to show that in Poland, there is no place for sport which does not provide any opportunities for development in other areas of life. Moreover, it is possible for outstanding sports persons to achieve success not only in sport, but also, in other aspects of life. Besides this, an important message was the signal that sport does not break spirits but on the contrary, it is a school for life beyond sport.

The beginning of the 1980s was a time of negative emotions related to the introduction of martial law in Poland (1981) and undignified events in the world of sport. It is worth mentioning, for example, the boycotting of the Olympic Games in Moscow (1980) and Los Angeles (1984) and the retreat from Coubertin's idea of

² Homer's knights, although they fought with different intentions than e.g. Achilles (revenge) and Hector (reverence and honour), appeared to be generous and honourable. The example of Achilles' cruelty is that of profanation after having cast insults over the corpse of Hector. However, on the other hand, Achilles is aware of his tragic fate and is able to show compassion and generosity. Hector, by contrast, seems to be the opposite of Achilles, and although he is equally courageous, he is less irritable than Achilles, he does not burn with hatred, and he understands that in a fight, one may have to lose. In spite of the fact that the brave and unrestrained Achilles is the main hero, it is Hector who compels greater admiration, in view of his ability of devotion and his sense of duty. In Homer (2005), *Iliad*, Greg, Kraków.

³ The enemy of titans, a member of a wealthy and eminent clan of Athenian aristocracy, who not only strove zealously for freedom of his native land but also won in the Pythian Games and in Olympia. In Herodotus (2005), *Dzieje*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, pp. 480, 482.

⁴ *Agathos* can be an adjective but it can also be a noun. However, *agathos* is a term including many other notions of the ancient Greeks, such as e.g. good, generous, wise, just, strong, brave, or also useful. <https://agathoi.wordpress.com/key-homeric-terms> (18.10.2018).

⁵ The subject discussed in the present work was presented at the International Conference in Mińsk (Belarus, 2018) on the subject – Values, Traditions and Innovation of Contemporary Sport, as well as in Athens at the 18th Annual International Conference on Sports (2018), the subject of which was Economic, Management, Marketing & Social Aspects, Athens Institute for Education and Research.

amateurship, which allowed the first professional sportsmen to compete in Olympiads (1984). Experts claim that this era began the process, continuing until now, which can be described in the words of KazimierzDoktór, “from Olympic games to games of business” (Doktór 2014: 244).

Eventually, it was specified that the award would honour outstanding sportsmen who were representatives of solid but not necessarily brilliant professional careers and people who exemplified a proper attitude in their daily lives. Although the idea of referring to the Greek Olympic ideal crystallised in autumn 1984, the unique event for conferring the distinction for the first time took place one year later. The distinction of *KalosKagathos* is an award of an exclusively symbolic character; it is a cultural value and a symbol of universal and timeless principles, which are expressed in the symbolism of the disc itself. Sport belongs to the area of symbolic culture, and the characteristics of symbolic behaviours are their additional meaning and additional perceived value, understood by people of a particular cultural circle (Krawczyk 2006). The laureates are representatives of symbolic capital related to awards, which has become particularly meaningful due to globalisation of cultural and media industries (English 2013).

The symbolism of the “medal after medals” (Fig. 1) refers to the ideals of ancient Greece as well as those selected by the chapter house outstanding former sports-

men, who have achieved success in other areas following their competitive sport careers. The garment on the outstretched hand symbolises the dignity of the awarded. It is worth noting that Professor Jerzy Nowakowski’s medal received the third prize in the national contest entitled “Sport in Art” in 1986, which was organised by the Polish Olympic Committee and the Museum of Sport in Warsaw (Nowakowski and Nowakowska 2004). Furthermore, one of the medals is kept in the museum in Olympia (Greece), which is an iconic place where ancient Olympiads were held. This is undoubtedly an honour and a meaningful recognition for our Polish, prestigious award, as well as a symbol for the elite of *KalosKagathos*.

KalosKagathos are mainly “People of the Medal” as well as jurors of the award who perform their task with solemnity and dignity. They are eminent people and instances of all types of prestige in chairpersons of the chapter house: rectors of the Jagiellonian University⁶. The composition of the chapter house has also included chairmen of the Polish Olympic Committee⁷. The members of the chapter house who have fulfilled their functions the longest are: RyszardNiemiec, the originator of the idea and laureate of the distinction in 2003; Józef Lipiec (Jagiellonian University), co-founder and long-time chairman of the Polish Olympic Academy; and Aleksander Krawczuk (Jagiellonian University)⁸. The medal is associated with the prestigious aca-



Figure 1. The two sides of the medal

Front of the Medal Reverse of the Medal

Source: Jerzy Nowakowski’s private collection.

⁶ Józef Gierowski, Aleksander Koj, Andrzej Pelczar, Franciszek Ziejka, Karol Musioł, and Wojciech Nowak, the current rector.

⁷ Starting from the first edition of the medal, they were: Marian Renke, Bolesław Kapitan, Aleksander Kwaśniewski (president of the Republic of Poland, 1995–2005), Andrzej Szalewicz, Stanisław Stefan Paszczyk, PiotrNurowski, and Andrzej Kraśnicki (current chairman of the Polish Olympic Committee since 2010).

⁸ A member of the chapter house of the early medal editions was one of the later laureates (1994) and the one who gave the name to the distinction: WojciechLipoński. One of the members of the chapter house was also Anna Pawlak, and the one who fulfilled the duties of secretary was editor Jerzy Wicherek. Zbigniew Porada, also a member of the chapter house. In the last editions of the medal, there were also the laureate of the first edition from 1984, WojciechZablocki, as well as the recently deceased and frequently titled Polish sportswoman and laureate of the distinction of 1994, Irena Szewińska.

demical institution of Jagiellonian University, the oldest university in Poland and one of the oldest in Europe, which has represented the distinction since its beginning. Since 1987, the medal has been collaboratively handled by Jagiellonian University, the editorial board of *Tempo*, the Polish Olympic Committee and the Polish Olympic Academy⁹.

It is necessary to underline that over the thirty-five years, out of hundreds of nominees, in each of the ten editions, only seven “magnificent” awards were made. Listed below¹⁰ are the laureates starting from the first edition (1985) until the last one in 2017. Each of the medallists deserves a separate report, but space limitations preclude more extensive biographical information: *KalosKagathos 1984*: Jerzy Chromik, Stefan Dziedzic, Witalis Ludwiczak, Zbigniew Resich, Marian Suski, Marian Śliwiński, Wojciech Zabłocki; *KalosKagathos 1987*: Izabela Cywińska, Roman Ciesielski, Jerzy Jurowicz, Jan Karol Kostrzewski, Jerzy Olszowski, Witold Henryk Paryski; *KalosKagathos 1989*: Adam Brodecki, Czesław Centkiewicz, Władysław Hasiór, Tadeusz Koszarowski, Adam Papée, Zdobysław Stawczyk, Kazimierz Wejchert; *KalosKagathos 1993*: Leszek Balcerowicz, Zbigniew Garnuszewski, Zbigniew Lewandowski, Jan Nawrocki, Edward Popiołek, Leszek Rostwo-Suski, Wanda Rutkiewicz, Marek Walczewski; *KalosKagathos 1994*: Waldemar Baszanowski, Marian Dudziak, Wojciech Lipoński, Czesław Marchewczyk, Jerzy Młynarczyk, Zbigniew Pietrzykowski, Irena Szewińska; *KalosKagathos 2001*: Zbigniew Boniek, Janusz Czerwiński, Michał Joachimowski, Bogusław Nowak, Jacek Pietrzyk, Wilibald Winkler, Sobiesław Zasada; *KalosKagathos 2003*: Andrzej Bachleđa-Curuś, Maria Kwaśniewska-Maleszewska, Michał Kleiber, Ryszard Niemiec, Zenon Ważny, Maksymilian Więcek, Marian Zieliński; *KalosKagathos 2009*: Jacek Bierkowski, Barbara Grochalska-Kurkowiak, Teresa Kodelska-Łaszek, Andrzej Łędzki, Mieczysław Nowicki, Helena Oszast, Bohdan Tomaszewski; *KalosKagathos 2013*: Zbigniew Czajkowski, Barbara Gorgoń-Flont, Kajetan Hądzelek, Marian Machowski, Janusz Różycki, Adam Smelczyński, Danuta Straszyńska-Kossek, Jerzy Twardokens;

KalosKagathos 2017: Iwona Bielska, Czesław Lang, Edward Mleczek, Zbigniew Pacelt, Antonii Piechniczek, Grażyna Rabsztyń, Aleksander Ronikier.

Firstly, it is necessary to note that among the 71 distinguished people, there are 11 *KalosKagathos* women, which is a little over 15% of all the laureates. The most numerous groups comprise representatives of individual sports (51), Olympic Games participants (34), and winter sports representatives (10). In sport categories, there are athletes (17), basketball players (12), fencers (10), football players (3), hockey players (3), tennis players (3), and skiers (3). There are also “heavy-weight athletes”: one boxer and two weightlifters. There are two representatives each for volleyball, alpinism, cycling, and hockey, as well as one representative of handball, shooting (tramp), speedway, rowing, swimming, modern pentathlon, motor racing, luge, skating, and sport aviation. It is necessary to notice the lack of representatives of such Olympic events as field hockey, horse riding, gymnastics, wrestling and judo. In regard to post-sport accomplishments, the most numerous group of medallists are representatives from the world of science, including 24 professors of great prestige. The areas of greatest representation are medical sciences (health and physical culture sciences) (23) and technical sciences (15). The average age of the awardees at the time of their award is 66 years, which testifies that they have to represent a proper, ethical attitude over a lifetime (Tomecka 2018)¹¹.

The versatile personality of Professor Halina Zdebska-Biziewska

There are many theories and concepts of personality and descriptions of its inner structure, which makes up a subject of interest regarding the representatives of several sciences. Sociologists understand personality as a composition of biological, psychical and social-cultural factors and they often refer to the definition of Jan Szczepański, who writes that personality is “a social element in man and an internalised culture as well as a dynamic organisation of ideas, attitudes, motives, built on the basis of biological nature” (Szczepański 1970: 108). However, due to scientific and professional interests and social activity, it can be accepted that Professor Zdebska-Biziewska is a physical culture personality¹² (Dzi-

⁹ A special and equally honourable role was performed by institutionalised members of the chapter house of the first edition: the Academic Sports Association, *Tempo* sports daily (which simultaneously took over the media affairs), and the Chief Committee for Physical Culture and Sport. In the 2009 edition, the newspaper *Przegląd Sportowy* [Sport Review] substituted for the daily *Tempo* in the chapter house, and it continues to handle the media affairs. A few medal bestowals have also been covered by Polish television, and the last editions were shown by the Polsat private TV station.

¹⁰ Perforce, I include only the dates of the consecutive editions and I mention the distinguished by their names and surnames. More information about the laureates can be found in the work M. Tomecka, “The Elite...”.

¹¹ Contents included in this and the preceding subsection has been sent for publication in “The Athens Journal of Sports” – M. Tomecka: “The Elite of *KalosKagathos* in Poland”. Available on: <https://www.athensjournals.gr/ajspo/forthcoming>

¹² A thorough attempt at identification of the various factors influencing the shaping of personality (involving the components of its structure) directed towards physical culture was made by Dziubiński, Z., (2017). *Osobowość w kontekście kultury fizycznej*, pp. 27-54. In: Dziubiński, Z., Janowski, K. W., (ed.), *Kultura fizyczna a osobowość*. Warsaw: AWF, SOS RP.

ubiński 2017), including sport personality¹³ (Tomecka 2009) and olympic personality¹⁴ (Lipiec 1999). She is also a knightess of olympism, a tireless promoter of fair play and *homo olympicus* who, according to Józef Lipiec, is “not necessarily only an outstanding sportsperson, but also, a person of right character features. He is equipped with specific valours of a self-fulfilling subject. He is the same in a sport agon of any level as in any other fragment of life beyond sport” (Lipiec 2017: 13). Nonetheless, most of all, the personality of Professor Zdebska-Biziewska is an example of contemporary embodiment of the Old Greek ideal of *kalokagathia* in the sense given to it by Plato: goodness, beauty and reason.

Professor Halina Zdebska-Biziewska as the embodiment of beauty

Everyone who met the Professor personally will admit that she was an embodiment of physical beauty (Fig. 2). Tall, slim and sporty silhouette, a gracefully moving figure of gentle facial features, with a kind smile and with eyes of penetrating gaze, full of understanding – these are only a few of several physical and esthetical features of this attractive and always elegant lady – Halina Zdebska-Biziewska. The professor was also a team sport personality, engaged in volleyball since her childhood and she always underlined that moral beauty which completed physical perfection of a sportsman made up the foundations of the rule of fair play. In the beginnings of H. Zdebska-Biziewska’s multiannual adventure with sport, already as a student of primary school, she was many-time representative at local and regional school

competitions. Then, she became a regularly training competitor at the “Korona” Sports Club in Kraków, to eventually study coaching at the University of Physical Education in Kraków and to represent AZS AWF Kraków (Academic Sport Association at the University of Physical Education in Kraków) (AWF archive, 2018).

Halina Zdebska Biziewska described not only the beauty of sport from a holistic approach and with deep understanding but also proved that “beauty can have application in relation to the reality of the playground” and team sport games. The author of “The Essence and Values of the Team Games in Sport” also writes that “the way of understanding beauty which has its origin in Homer (connecting goodness with beauty) can have application in relation to the reality of the playground as beauty of the game, beauty of the presentation, beautiful competition or beautiful sport fighting”. However, this beauty of the game in the sense of a show dictates the rejection of traditional analysis, as the presentation of the physical build of competitors is not the essence of the sport match (Zdebska 2008). That is why “in relation to the activities of a volleyball or basketball player, such categories of beauty can be applied as: accuracy, inventiveness, agility, dynamics, perfection and fluency, etc.” (Zdebska 2008: 85). Among others, it was the practical and theoretical “anchoring” in sport structures which resulted in the fact that the beauty of the sporty body of Professor Zdebska-Biziewska maintained harmony with the beauty of the spirit shaped by sport.

It is necessary to bear in mind the beauty located in values of the profession of a trainer performed by Professor Zdebska-Biziewska, but most of all, by the pro-



Figure 2. Halina Zdebska - Biziewska

Source: <https://www.google.pl/search?q=obrazy+dla+halina+zdebska+biziewska>

¹³ On the basis of the personalities presented by F. Znaniński, e.g. technical personality in relation to technical life, the term sport-centred personality can also be used and it becomes a foundation of the broadly understood social personality. More in: Tomecka, M., (2009). *Kariery sportowe a kariery zawodowe czynnych i byłych zawodników w hokeju na trawie*, pp. 84-86. Katowice: Ukup G&G

¹⁴ Although professor Zdebska-Biziewska was not an Olympian, according to Józef Lipiec, among the eight basic types of combinations, which constitute the Olympian personality, there is the type: beautiful, wise and good and thus, the professor could be regarded as a personality of the *homo olympicus* type. In: Lipiec, J., (1999). *Filozofia olimpiizmu*, p. 140. Warsaw: Sprint.

fession of an academic tutor. "Personality of the teacher should be characterised by spiritual culture and true humanism (...). Such a teacher can focus the attention of young people on educational values and educational values of the great symbolic culture and art in the process of school education, but s/he can also perceive and teach values which are popular and fulfil life" (Zuchora 2009: 123). The message of Tadeusz Kotarbiński reminds us that we are all teachers, and every teacher is doomed for "moral greatness" (cit. after Zuchora 2009: 33), thus, every teacher is doomed for moral beauty. Such a teacher, trainer and educator was Professor Zdebska-Biziewska, very much appreciated by her students and trainees. She complemented the beauty of a fit body with the beauty of spirit through high culture (classical music, theatre and literature). Obviously, it is a number of factors which decide about the beauty of man as a unity of reason, heart and body, including different life roles performed by him. Besides the role of a daughter, wife and best friend, one of the most important roles and also one of the socially most appreciated was the "beautiful" role of a mother performed by H. Zdebska-Biziewska. The experience of motherhood enables to have a different, more sublimated perception of the surrounding world and almost naturally equips a person with the readiness to offer help, focused upon the needs of another man. Such a fully beautiful Professor Zdebska-Biziewska is remembered by the author of the present work.

Professor Halina Zdebska-Biziewska as the epitome of goodness

It seems that, at least for a certain part of ancient Greeks, beauty was linked to or even identified with goodness, because "what was beautiful was good at the same time, and there was no such goodness that would not be beauty" (Karolak, 2015). That is why it seems that a beautiful and good spirit can live only in a beautiful body and "the commitment to goodness is realised on the grounds of truth" (Zuchora 2009: 78). Truth, generosity and kindness as synonyms of goodness and the resources of a versatile, properly constructed personality always accompanied Professor. H. Zdebska-Biziewska's "goodness", reflected in different dimensions of human activity, performed to the fullest through her social activity, often connected with her scientific and

professional activity. Besides numerous distinctions¹⁵ and social functions¹⁶ performed by the professor, special attention, in connection to the subject of this paper, should be paid to the activity in favour of the Polish and international Olympic movement. Among other activities, she undertook cooperation with the International Olympic Academy (the greatest world centre for research on olympism), she represented the Polish Olympic Committee and Polish Olympic Academy at the congress of young people from all over the world in Olympia (Greece). Halina Zdebska-Biziewska carried out the function of the secretary of the Małopolska Olympic Council of the Polish Olympic Committee in Kraków (1999-2002) and she organised events of cultural nature related to the Olympic idea, such as e.g. the Polish Olympic Book exhibition or a poster contest connected with the organisation of the Olympic Games in Sydney in 2000 (AWF Kraków archive). H. Zdebska-Biziewska represented the Polish Olympic Committee in the International Arena many times and from 2013, she was the chairperson of the Polish Fair Play Club of the Polish Olympic Committee and in 2016, at the 22nd General Assembly of the European Fair Play Movement (EFPM) in Vienna, she was chosen a member of the Board of the EFPM (Polish woman in international sport organisations, 2016). The engagement of Professor Halina Zdebska-Biziewska's good will in her "personal goodness", we find in the fulfilled roles of a virtuous: person, mother, wife, pedagogue, coach, ambassador of olympism and promoter of fair play.

Professor Halina Zdebska-Biziewska as an embodiment of wisdom

The virtue of wisdom is accurately described using the words of archbishop Stanisław Wielgus, namely that "Wisdom is the synthesis of knowledge, goodness and justice" as well as commonly known, experience. It is difficult to overprice the resources of the knowledge of Professor Zdebska-Biziewska, who, already as a young and very good student, was committed to the University of Physical Education in Kraków for many years. Devoting herself equally perfectly to the performed profession and scientific work, she consequently moved to next levels of her two-track career. H. Zdebska-Biziewska was an excellent didactician¹⁷, she was known to be

¹⁵ After graduation from university (1984), H. Zdebska was honoured with Silver Distinction of the Academic Sport Association of the University of Physical Education and in 1988, the Gold Distinction of the Regional Association of Volleyball in Kraków. In 2002, H. Zdebska-Biziewska was honoured with the title "Friend of Sport", and in 2005, with the Silver Cross of Merit by the President of the Republic of Poland (AWF archive, Kraków).

¹⁶ In the years 1995-1999, she was a member of the Board of the Academic Sport Association at the University Education Academy in Kraków. In 1996, she was a member of the Board of Culture and Education of the Polish Olympic Committee and belonged to the Youth Club of the Polish Olympic Academy. She was also a member of the Consulting Group regarding the Cultural and Educational Project of the 2006 Winter Olympiad (by the Office of Olympic Strategy in Kraków), from 2002, she was a member of the International Scientific Association of Sport Games.

¹⁷ As a lecturer she held classes as an assistant intern regarding the volleyball specialisation at the University of Physical Education in Kraków, then as an assistant, she held didactic classes on volleyball at the faculties of pedagogy, faculty for trainers and rehabilitation. She also held postgraduate courses for trainers and coordinated work of the examination board at the university as a Secretary of the Department Selection Committee. She was responsible for the candidate groups and student training.

an exceptionally talented lecturer¹⁸, not only at the University of Physical Education in Kraków. She also ran the nationwide methodical-training workshops for teachers of the WFis Collage (1998-2005), prepared documentation and managed grants of the Ministry of National Education and Sport regarding the implementation of post-graduation studies related to Physical Education for the graduates of the Physical Education Studies (1999). H. Zdebska-Biziewska held diploma seminars, promoting numerous M.A.¹⁹ theses and was a reviewer of four doctorate theses and two post-doctoral dissertations (nauka-polska.pl, 2018). Moreover, Professor was a member of the Physical Education and Sport Faculty Council and a member of Senate of the University of Physical Education in Kraków (AWF archives), a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences, VI Department – of Medical Sciences; Rehabilitation Committee, the Physical Culture and Social Integration Committee (nauka-polska.pl, 2018), and the vice-editor-in-chief of the scientific journal “Studies in Sport Humanities”.

The intense activity of H. Zdebska-Biziewska in the field of science²⁰ resulted in her doctoral degree - in 1995, she finished her doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Professor Józef Lipiec. The title of the dissertation was: “Sport Hero. Study of the individual case of Bronisław Czech (1908-1944)”, and the dissertation was distinguished with a prestigious Bronze Olympic Laurel Wreath in the category of works of science and popular sciences. The habilitation monograph of Professor Zdebska-Biziewska entitled: “The Essence and Values of Team Games in Sport” was a successful attempt to complete the theory of games with humanistic sciences and was of pioneer nature. This interdisciplinary work published in 2008 was based on the issues of philosophy, sociology, psychology of sport, psychology of society, cultural anthropology, as well as the command of sport practice. H. Zdebska-Biziewska was also involved in journalistic activity²¹ and humanistic research, which resulted in nu-

merous scientific papers and participation in local²² and foreign²³ conferences. Special attention should be paid to the fact of her participation in the prestigious 13th International Session for Directors of National Olympic Academies. Olympic Values. At the conference Value of Excellence as an Educational Tool, where she presented a speech entitled: “The Strive for Athletic Excellence: A Central Element of Olympic Education”, representatives of 73 countries participated. This was undeniable recognition of the activity of the Polish Olympic environment.

Conclusions

Due to limited framework of this work, it is not possible to mention all of the wise, good and beautiful merits of professor Halina Zdebska-Biziewska. I am convinced that those who knew her, will confirm that they had the honour and pleasure to meet a person of unusual bodily beauty, but also of a beautifully shaped inner spirit. Professor Zdebska-Biziewska was one of the very few individuals who fulfilled their important social roles linking work with passion which was undoubtedly the promotion of Olympic values. The knightness of olympism was an embodiment of the idea of fair play, the rule which “also shapes moral sensitivity, making up a typically human disposition, expressing itself as attentiveness towards injustice and harm, eagerness to provide help to the weak and the needy. Fair play is at the same time the most elegant way of being – in sport and beyond it” (Zdebska 2014: 197). There are no perfect people, however, “about the maturity of a person, his/her perfection is mainly decided by the fact that a person lets himself/herself be carried by true values, that s/he can be fully absorbed by them” (Zuchora 2009: 79). All the “People of the Medal” and distinguished with the “*Kalos Kagathos*” medal are exceptional people marked with social pres-

¹⁸ She was the manager of the postgraduate studies for teachers with pedagogical qualifications. She was also a lecturer and held practical courses for sports instructors and instructors of recreational movement. From 2002, she was a lecturer for postgraduate studies held by the Institute of Public Affairs by the Jagiellonian University, organised together with PKOL (Polish Olympic Committee) on the subject of managing sport organisations. She worked as an expert at the Centre of Education for Managers at the University of Sport Education in Warsaw (Sportowetempo.pl, 2018). In the years 2006-2008, she was also a lecturer at the Chorzów School of Banking.

¹⁹ The works were often distinguished e.g. the work of Magdalena Górowska: “Polish Table Tennis at the Olympic Games 1988-2004”, for which she was distinguished in the annual contest of the PKOL (Polish Olympic Committee) for the best dissertation on the Olympic subject.

²⁰ In 1998, she published the manual: “Volleyball: programme of training children and teenagers” together with J. Uznarowicz. The contents of the manual is the basis for the programme, which is carried out up to now at the Schools of Sport Mastery of the Polish Volleyball Association. She published numerous papers on biographical sport writing regarding the Olympians: B. Grocholska-Kurkowiak, J. Ustupski, M. Woyna-Orlewicz, S. Marusarz. The culmination of her research work was the publication of another book in 2000 entitled “Champions of Skis”. In 2001, a new book appeared: “Malysz: Thank God.”, in which H. Zdebska-Biziewska is the author of the biographical part. In 2007, she was a co-author of the book: “Volleyball. Defense of the field in tactical perspective. Manual for instructors and trainers”.

²¹ She promoted values of sport and Olympism. The expression of these activities was the long cooperation with the editors of “Narty” (Skis), “Sportowy Styl” (Sport Style), “Tempo” (Tempo), “Dziennik Polski” (Polish Daily), “Akademicki Przegląd Sportowy” (Academic Sport Review), “Magazyn Olimpijski” (Olympic Magazine). In the years 1994-2005, about 200 articles appeared in the mentioned magazines.

²² Such an example are the consecutively organized conferences of Salos RP and PKOL in Warsaw or by the International Scientific Association of Sport Games in Warsaw, Białą Podlaska and in Kraków.

²³ Such examples are the 9th International Sport Science Conference – Management of High Performance Athletes Training in Vilnius (Lithuania), Health and Body Values in the Eyes of the Higher School of Business in Nowy Sącz and 13th International Congress of Physical Education and Sport in Komotini (Greece).

tige and social trust, making up a collective social capital (Sztompka 2016). Halina Zdebska-Biziewska was not distinguished with the “*KalosKagathos*” medal, she was not an Olympian, but in light of the above considerations, it can be accepted that she was a contemporary embodiment of the Old Greek ideal of *kalokagathia* and *homo olympicus*. In conclusion, Professor Zdebska-Biziewska can be regarded as an individual social capital (Sztompka 2016).

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