Emotion is central to human character, infiltrating our physiological functions and our mental constitution. In sport, athletes feel emotion in specific ways, from joy to anger and despair.

This is the first book to examine emotion in sport from a philosophical perspective, building on concepts developed by ancient Greek and modern philosophers. For instance, how is Aristotle’s concept of *catharsis* applied to the sports field? How about *power* as advanced by Nietzsche, or *existentialism* as discussed by Kierkegaard? *Emotion in Sports* explores the philosophical framework for the expression of emotion and relates it to our psychological understanding, from the perspective of both athlete and spectator.

A fascinating and useful read for students, researchers, scholars, and practitioners in the fields of sport sciences, philosophy, and psychology.

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Dedicated to David Kilpatrick in friendship in eternal return.
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I would like to thank Michael McNamee for inspiring and supporting me in this journey. Without him this book would not have been possible. The idea emerged when he heard my talk at the IAPS conference in Cardiff and he asked me to submit a proposal. In addition, many thanks go to many members and supporters of the International Association for the Philosophy of Sport. I have met several wonderful scholars and enjoyed many discussions at its conferences. Many ideas to write essays and to create anthologies emerged from these gatherings, some with booze, some without. I should start with David Kilpatrick who introduced me to IAPS and extend my gratitude to Scott Kretchmar, Gunnar Breivik, Jim Parry, Jeffrey Fry, Javi Frias, Jesus Ilundain, Cesar Torres, John Russell, Emanuel Isidori, Ron Welters, Gunnar Breivik, Kenneth Aggerhold, and Charlene Weaving.

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Introduction

When I wrote my first paper on emotions in sport and presented it at the IAPS conference in Cardiff in 2014, I had no idea that I would eventually write a book on the same topic. For that I am thankful to Michael McNamee and Routledge. I cannot forget those few days I spent in Cardiff, nor the hospitality of the locals. After much research and reflection, I asked myself how I got entangled in this immense topic and how I would emerge from it with some success; after all, one could write one book on this topic for and according to every single school of philosophy. My readers will be the judges of the outcome. Before I could make any claims on emotion in sport, the first challenge I faced was developing an understanding of emotion itself. I had to provide a preliminary understanding of emotion and all the related phenomena.

Emotion is a crucial dimension of human existence, a dimension still not sufficiently understood; scholars and psychologists are trying to understand it based on speculation, experience, and research. Emotions are experienced throughout our entire being, from body to soul, mind, and language. Emotions are affected by physiological conditions that have to do with our unique bodies, psychic conditions that often remain unconscious, and cognitive conditions, too. Finally, in addition to gesturally, we express emotions linguistically. Any approach that does not consider the human being as integral (mind-body-soul) is incomplete in part. For some time, philosophers dismissed emotions, each in their own different way, and placed them under the rule of the mind; the Stoics took a radical approach and believed emotions could be controlled by the mind. This position leaves us only to be immature in relation to our emotional composition, which I believe is the case with humanity at this stage of its evolution, as we are all configurations of repressed
emotions. While some emotions can be controlled by the mind, in general they cannot, not to speak of the diversity of emotions and their different nature. They have their own integral developments and dimensions that cannot be understood or transformed solely through cognitive intervention. In most cases, the mental control of emotions is simply the avoidance of emotion and the refusal to address emotional 'problems.'

Contrary to Stoicism, William James emphasizes the physiological aspect of emotion (James 1884). For James, our emotional life is caught up in our bodily frame and our feelings are the fruits of the same soil with the grossest bodily sensations of pleasure and pain (25). While the role that physiological functions play in our emotional make-up cannot be dismissed, it comprises only one dimension of our emotional composition. The same person can have different emotional responses to the same physiological condition depending upon various factors (one’s general emotional or physical state, etc.); the variety of such emotional responses already refutes entirely James’ theory and shows its limitation. Take, for instance, a man who has a low tolerance for hunger and becomes cranky and angry at the first hunger pang. If such a man goes through a practice of fasting and grows accustomed to hunger to some extent, he will most likely not have the same emotional response at the first pang of hunger.

As Darwin distinguishes when using the idea of universality (1872/1998), emotions can be deep or superficial, basic, and non-basic (basic and derivative). What these basic emotions are have been a point of disagreement among philosophers: for the Stoics,¹ they include delight, distress, desire, and fear (Graver 2007); Epicurus finds pain and pleasure (and their related feelings) to be foundational and builds his theory upon them. Whereas other philosophers speak of emotion, feeling or affect, Hobbes refers to them instead as passions and proposes seven passions: appetite, desire, love, aversion, hatred, joy, and grief (1668/1994). Finally, Descartes’ list includes admiration-surprise, love, hate, desire, joy, and sadness (1649/1989: Part 2), while for Spinoza there are three fundamental emotions (1989: 177): desire, pleasure, and displeasure or pain (although his full list of all emotions includes close to 50 emotions). Given cultural and individual differences, devising such lists is highly tentative; however, to claim that there are primordial emotions seated in the deeper strata of human existence is not a far-fetched idea.

Related to the physiological model, and even to Darwin’s theory, is the projectivist theory, examined critically by Johnston, which claims
that human beings generate certain emotions (especially the basic ones) so that they can preserve their lives and keep a distance from what may infect or kill them (2001: 185–186). For instance, we may be disgusted by carcasses or rotten food, feces, or some seemingly dangerous animals; even if the disgust is not in these objects per se, we experience the emotion of disgust before them as a protective force. Think of fear and the role it plays in preserving human life. However, much of this has subjective variety. While there are human beings who are afraid of the smallest harmless insects and birds, their fear is true to them, but not necessary to preserve their physical lives. This however, could suggest that there is an emotional impact and that such people are protecting their emotional well-being.

Emotions can be reflections of disposition or object-driven. For instance, a human being who has a low tolerance for hunger may easily be cranky and angry at the first pang of hunger. No object, internal or external, is yet the target of his anger. On the other hand, emotions can take on objects and be internal or external. If a sad thought comes to my mind, I may become sad and start crying; or, if I see a human being in a state of intense suffering and relate to it, I may become sad.

Language cannot be an entirely adequate expression of emotion; language can, in no way, be adequate for anything. Yes, it is a form of expression, but it has limits. Regarding language and its relationship to emotion, the following can be said. First, language may not be able to cover the entire scope of human emotions. Second, language may not be able to reflect the intensity of human emotions. If different words enable us to convey such intensity, there are different scales of intensity, too. In English, for instance, we have dislike, hate, disgust, and odium to express our distance to and repulsion for an object, but there may be some repulsion beyond odium. In short, not every scale of a particular emotion can have a name (no doubt, there are other, non-linguistic, forms of expressing emotions). Finally, there are compound feelings for which there may be no specific linguistic expression; such feelings may be referred to as ‘sentiment’ or ‘mood.’ The fact that English has many words to stand for ‘emotion’ and related phenomena shows the complexity of the subject. I do not intend to convolute the semantic field here, but the words ‘emotion,’ ‘feeling,’ ‘sentiment,’ ‘passion,’ ‘mood,’ and ‘affect’ (from Spinoza) have close affinities and reflect different facades of the same human phenomenon, not to mention their different etymologies. Tentatively, I agree with the following definition Goldie offers, which will be examined throughout this book:
An emotion . . . is a relatively complex state, involving past and present episodes of thoughts, feelings, and bodily changes, dynamically related in a narrative of part of a person’s life, together with dispositions to experience further emotional episodes, and to act out of the emotion and to express that emotion. Your expression of emotion and the actions which spring from the emotion, whilst not part of the emotion itself, are none the less part of the narrative which runs through – and beyond – the emotion, mutually affecting and resonating in that emotion, and in further emotions, moods, and traits, and in further actions.

(Goldie 2003: 5)

As for the structure of this book, it has three parts. The first part, ‘Theoretical Framework,’ is designed to present a theoretical framework for emotions in sport. I do not attempt to present a unique theory of emotion here; instead, I use existing philosophical ideas to draw parameters within which I can examine sport-specific emotions. These include catharsis, affect, power, and quality. Moreover, I benefited from many different disciplines, schools of philosophy, and traditions, but could not have included every school in my discussion due to the specific focus of this work. The second part, ‘Sport-Specific Emotions,’ discusses emotions as they appear in the context of sport such as joy, fear, anxiety, anger, guilt, sadness, etc. In the third part, ‘Care of Emotions,’ I examine ideas, methods, and therapeutic interventions to address emotional problems in sports.

The book does not offer a theory of emotion, but rather builds an integral approach and applies it to the sporting context. If the spirit of sport sustains itself in a balance of emotions, what are those emotions? What type of emotional/affective response could upset and ruin the spirit of sport? What are some pathways that can help us deal with emotional problems, as they shed light on analyzing and diagnosing such problems? What follows below is a summary of each chapter.

Part I: theoretical framework

Chapter 1: catharsis of emotions

The subject of the discharge of emotions has been at the center of many debates and incorporated into psychological discourse and practice. Although Aristotle developed his theory of catharsis on theater,
it has been applied to other areas of human existence and can also be applied to the field of sport. What type of a channel is sport when it comes to expressing our emotions, whether as players or as spectators? In what ways does and can sport serve as a means of dealing with our emotions? This question becomes crucial, especially when we keep in mind the quality of human emotions, the subject matter of Chapter 4 of this book. There is a range of human emotions from low to high, which every human being harbors; to be able to work on the quality of our emotions, if that is established as a goal, we need to express or discharge them – this is where catharsis becomes important. Therefore, its appropriation by psychology is not accidental.

**Chapter 2: the question of affect-impact and collective dimension of emotions**

Every being produces multiple affects and we are connected through these sometimes known, sometimes unknown, affects, rather than a strictly knowable chain of causality. Spinoza introduces this concept and includes emotions within his theory, or what he calls ‘passion,’ among which he counts joy, sadness, and desire. All beings are somehow linked to each other through a network of affects. The things we do and say have an effect on others, which work in their own contexts. Affects can be understood in terms of their intensity, scope, type, etc. In the sporting field, the things athletes do and say have their own affects. When the athletes’ fame and the scope of their game increases, the affect often increases accordingly. Affects do not follow any strict chain of causality, but they do shape their immediate environment in ways that are beyond the control of the affect-producing agent. Both the individual and collective dimension of emotions in sport will be discussed in this chapter.

**Chapter 3: the feeling of power and power relations**

‘The feeling of power’ may sound strange in English, but it is a direct translation of the German phrase, *Machtsgefühl*, as it appears in Friedrich Nietzsche’s works. Nietzsche is the first philosopher to develop a philosophy of power, which is insightful, although it is scattered throughout his writings and has led to many controversial interpretations. The basic claim of this philosophy of power is as follows: we are always in power relations; we exert power on each
other in different ways, and there are different forms, or Gestalts, of power. Philosophers like Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault expanded on Nietzsche’s philosophy of power and presented their works in institutional contexts. In this chapter, I will explore power relations in sports and the way the feeling of power manifests itself in the field of sports. For example, how does a victorious team or athlete relate to the defeated one? Or, how do managers and trainers relate to their own players? Or, how do umpires and referees relate to competing athletes? I do not suggest that power relations are only vertical, as is the case in the examples listed here. I plan to explore all vertical and lateral power relations in sport.

**Chapter 4: quality of sentiments**

In his argument against the priority of reason in matters of morality, David Hume states that sentiments come first and reason is simply a handmaid to them. He then presents a list of sentiments such as benevolence, which, associated with likes and dislikes or attractions and repulsions, lie at the root of our moral actions. Agreeing with Hume but taking his argument further, we can speak of the quality of emotions, of emotions that are both high and low. Clearly, such an assumption will be based on value judgments and not everyone will agree on such determinations. However, it can be argued that there are emotions the expressions of which can be detrimental to the spirit of sporting and its practice either in the short or long run. For instance, excessive outbursts of anger, blaming one’s teammates, arrogance in victory, fear of performance (wrongly called “performance anxiety”), or excessive fear in general can be considered low feelings. Inversely, we can speak of uplifting, high-quality emotions that spur sporting practice to higher levels of performance.

**Part II: sport-specific emotions (SSE)**

**Chapter 5: fear, anxiety, pain, suffering, and the question of authenticity**

All human beings are faced with the dilemma of who they are and what they can be, whether they recognize it or not; which is to say, what they can be as higher, elevated beings. Different philosophers have spoken of this differently, and the question of transcendence has been understood in different ways in different historic
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contexts. In our age, transcendence has been this-worldly; we find our ‘authenticity,’ to use Heidegger’s phrase, in our worldly activities; we can transcend ourselves so that we can be authentic, so that we can be who we truly are. Sport is one outlet for such worldly transcendence. In order to achieve such transcendence, we need to overcome our fears and experience anxiety so as to be authentic. Kierkegaard is the first so-called existentialist thinker who presents an interesting picture of ‘authenticity’ in relation to such basic emotions as fear and anxiety. I will discuss existentialist literature to show how the field of sports is, or can be, such an outlet for becoming authentic, or to use a common phrase, to reach nirvana.

Chapter 6: other specific feelings in sporting context: anger, depression (or despair), envy, guilt, sadness et al.

The previous chapter focused on two special feelings, fear, and anxiety, as they manifest themselves in sport, but what about other sport-related feelings? It will take another whole book to discuss the variety of human emotions that are felt and expressed in the sporting community. Therefore, I took a sample of what I thought was more common. Here is the short list: anger, arrogance-hubris, depression, despair, envy, euphoria, fear, guilt, joy, pain-suffering, pleasure, pride, Schadenfreude, shame, and sadness. I will specifically address sport-specific versions of these feelings such as arrogance in victory, play-fear or play-anxiety (analogous to performance anxiety), mass-euphoria in victory, defeat despair, foul shame or foul guilt, teammate anger, prize envy, and so on.

Chapter 7: other specific feelings in sporting contexts: ambition, euphoria, hubris, pride et al.

This chapter is reserved for upbeat emotions in sport, emotions that motivate us, that propel us to strive and excel, such as ambition, without which contest would not exist. Such strife and its outcome produce other high emotions such as joy, pride, and euphoria. However, excessive doses of such emotions can also be detrimental to the spirit of contest and sport and ruinous for us and others, in the short and long run. In this chapter, I examine the dangers of the excess of these emotions and suggest possible antidotes.
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Part III: care of emotions

Chapter 8: ‘sentimental education’ of athletes

Do athletes need to be educated in the way they express their feelings? The question is a deeper one and pertains to the emotional make-up of each individual athlete. As I argue in previous chapters, we can speak of the quality of emotions and the affects of emotions. Athletes come from diverse emotional backgrounds and can, and often do, have, and express very raw, uncultivated emotions. These emotions could be worked on during training with the help of coaches and sport psychologists. If we care so much for the physical being of the athlete, why not for their psychological and emotional well-being? Cesar Torres called it ‘sentimental education’ in our discussion at the 2015 IAPS conference in Cardiff. Although the term originates from a literary context (Flaubert’s 19th-century novel), it can be applied to sports as well. How such an education can be implemented is a practical affair. Philosophers can start the conversation and if our ideas are sound, they will be implemented.

Chapter 9: therapeutic treatment of emotions in sporting practice

I do not suggest that the primary goal of each sport is to educate athletes and make them better human beings; however, sport can become, and often is, an outlet for the externalization of specific feelings, which would normally, i.e. in the absence of sports, lay dormant. For instance, emotions of performance anxiety, despair while losing, euphoria of goal-scoring, joy in victory, joy of playing with and playing against, anger at teammates’ poor performance, and guilt after defeat are such emotions; they are sport-specific – needless to say, most if not all of these emotions are not strictly limited to sport and have corollaries in other fields. We have to externalize and express our emotions, whatever they may be, so that we can work on and better understand them. Sport training and practice can be arenas for a therapeutics of emotions, therapeutics as understood in the broad sense of the original Greek word as healing. Sport heals in many ways, but the focus here is on emotional healing.
Chapter 10: emotion vs. action: physiological, psychological, linguistic, and rational aspects of emotion

What comes first? Emotion or action? Do we feel a specific emotion because of a specific action precisely at that moment when the action occurs? Or, are we disposed to feel a certain way and use that action as an excuse to express said emotion? On the other hand, if we have time to think, would we act in the same way, with the same expression of emotion? In this chapter, I will argue that every human being has an emotional make-up, or what psychologists call ‘emotional intelligence,’ which is a function of their physiological, linguistic, and cognitive constitution. All of these aspects are found in different degrees and configured in different ways in every human being. There are impulsive types, for instance, who do not think much before they act; there are articulate and inarticulate types who, respectively, express or do not express their emotions linguistically. What I want to propose in this chapter is the necessity of ‘emotional maturity’ on the part of athletes, a maturity that will be crucial during difficult moments of their sporting activity. This maturity can be developed in training time (see Chapter 5), but its true test will occur during the high stakes game.

Our emotional constitution and its problems stem from ourselves and our interaction with society. Sport is only one arena of human experience, no doubt a unique one, which, depending upon its scope, type, nature, and context, can bring out many intense emotions. Such emotions are not entirely ‘made’ within the context of sport, but they are ‘felt’ in sport. Especially in our global age where athletes from different cultures, therefore from different emotional backgrounds and experiences, blend, the total emotional experience becomes hard to understand and disentangle. It becomes even more difficult to do so when emotions are not expressed in any form, which can be due to individual or cultural reasons.

There are many different ways of classifying emotions, but no classification would be definitive, because emotions overlap with one another in many puzzling ways. Spinoza speaks of active vs. passive affects, while Hume divides passions into direct and indirect ones. Psychologists speak of negative and positive emotions as well as low-energy as opposed to high-energy ones. Although Nietzsche and Deleuze do not use these phrases for emotions, we can refer to emotions as being active or reactive. Moreover, we can
classify emotions in terms of their objects, whether they are outside the self or an expression of the self. Finally, we can categorize them according to their level of intensity as in anger vs. rage. These types of classifications, which arise throughout my research, help shed light on the nature of emotions, but cannot categorize them in any strictly definitive manner. Emotions are far more complex and so resist simple classification, not to mention the fact that every human being is a unique configuration of emotions.

In my research, I have benefited from many different schools of philosophy and psychology, even if I do not always agree with their core teachings. I have, for instance, benefited from works that are aligned with cognitive and normative theories, although my main interest for research lies elsewhere. Wherever I found interesting ideas, I explored them. In terms of my inclinations, I have close affinities to existentialism, phenomenology, and psychoanalysis, especially because their approaches to all subjects, including emotions, are integral, as they consider all aspects of the human being, do not subscribe to anthropocentric views, do not consider human beings generically as though we are all from the same cut and must fit into the same categories, and, most importantly, place great value on human emotion. I will end my introduction with a list of points that highlight my position on human emotions and which helped me navigate my work on this book:

- Emotion is a state of being that reflects our mental, psychic, and somatic conditions and is connected to such states as feeling, sentiment, and affect.
- Emotional conditions reside mostly in our unconscious, which may become conscious depending on one’s level of introspection.
- Emotions have different intensities, even if they may be of the same kind.
- Words denoting emotion cannot cover the entire spectrum of emotions; hence, language is not adequate to convey every emotion.
- While the expression of a ‘problem emotion’ is not the solution of that emotion, a contextualized discharge may help overcome it.
- Every type of emotion needs its own care and cultivation, although every emotion may be said to somehow be related within the character of the same person.
- Ideologies and social bonds may codify specific emotions, the dissolution of which may be more difficult than usual for an
individual to actualize; in other words, emotions have a collective dimension and currency.

Notes

1 I benefitted much from a recent work on Stoicism and emotions, namely, Die stoische Theorie der Gefühle by Michael Krewet.
2 In his intro to Emotions in the Practice of Psychotherapy, Plutchik lists four theories of emotion – those of Darwin, William James, psychoanalysis, and cognitive theory (2000), but does not mention those developed by philosophers over the centuries. Almost every major school of philosophy has its own theory of emotion.

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words, to turn ‘bad Eris’ into ‘good Eris,’ to use Nietzsche’s phrase by way of his reading of Hesiod (1976: 35), to transform lower emotions into higher ones.⁶ Although this may be a Herculean task, the vision of such transfiguration must be kept alive so that the sporting culture thrives in uplifting emotions, which many athletes still seek to achieve. Every member of the sporting community must channel his/her raw emotions into those that are sublime for a higher quality of emotional expressions, as they must be cognizant of the affects they create in specific power relations. Even though they are not exactly the same, Freud’s idea of sublimation overlaps with Nietzsche’s notion of transfiguration (the term “sublimation” is also used by Nietzsche). For Freud (1961), sublimation is the process of transforming libido into cultural activities and achievements such as arts and sciences, but we can add sports here as well (though discussion of sport is hardly present in Freud).

In my discussion in this chapter, I did not make clear distinctions among different members of the sporting community in relation to catharsis. Clearly, they each follow a different pathway in terms of their catharsis. While Aristotle focuses on the spectator in his catharsis theory, I have put the emphasis on the players. They are the primary beneficiaries of psychosomatic catharsis, while the spectators are bereft of the physical actions of the sporting field. Much analysis of catharsis has, however, revolved around spectators, with many studies concluding that sport spectators like to see aggression in sport and that it is presumably cathartic for them. The media simply caters to such demands while owners and managers are interested in numbers (higher number of viewers, spectators in the stadium, etc.) because they bring in more revenue. These factors, whether financial or ‘spectacular,’ I find to be extrinsic and destructive to the spirit of sport.

Notes

1 For an overview of ideas on catharsis from Aristotle until recent times, see Gordon W. Russell’s ‘Psychological Issues in Sport Aggression,’ Violence in Sport (Goldstein 1983).
2 One can ask if sport is physically cathartic for professional players because they play all the time and playing has become their primary nature. Do they still feel the discharge if they play almost habitually?
3 See Martinková and Parry’s essay, ‘On Biting in Sport – The Case of Luis Suárez,’ for an extensive analysis of this incident and for their argument as to why such out-of-context acts are not acceptable in sport, or in soccer in this case.
Different types of sport can induce different levels of physical catharsis. We should also not forget individual differences and the varying needs for physical catharsis. Some may need catharsis more than others. For athletes who have excess libido and cannot discharge it in their type of sport, they will have to find other ways to do so, rather than burden their field with their excess libidinal energies.

In this context, we must also add Melanie Klein and her followers, who view aggression as more fundamental than any other psychical phenomena.

By supporting the need for catharsis or the transfiguration of emotions in sport, I do not, in any way, subscribe to the functionalist theory of sport, let alone reduce sport to this function. Sport could then just become a medium for such transfiguration for some members of the sporting community, but this is not its primary function or nature. For different theories of sport, see Robert L. Simon’s ‘Theories of Sport’ (Torres 2014).

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transmitted? This is what Spinoza called ‘affection.’ Because affects are unformed, they can be transmitted from one body to another even unbeknownst to the person. This is not to say that emotions and feelings are transmitted in the same way, but rather, their conditions are transmitted. This is why what is of utmost importance are the kinds of affects that are produced and how they are transmitted in the domain of the collective unconscious, as, for instance, in media and in all types of spectacles (Deleuze, Thousand Plateaus by way of Brian Massumi).

**Conclusion**

There are deeper conditions that lie at the root of many of our feelings and emotions. Just to revisit the issue of semantics, it is not wrong, in my view, to say, for instance, that anger is an affect, an emotion, and a feeling. All these words reveal the different levels or depths of the emotion itself. The theory of affect, instigated by Spinoza and later taken on by Nietzsche, psychoanalysis, and Deleuze (each in his own manner), goes to this root. Why we feel this way or that way, why we burst out in anger at a teammate or why we always look for a guilty party when the problem in question may be collective, that we ourselves may be implicated in the problem; all of these emotional problems, the root of which often remains unknown to the person and which can adversely affect the spirit of playing must be sought in the psychosomatic development of individuals, in the unconscious layers of the economy of their drives and instincts, the social acceptance of these problematic emotions and the psychic developments associated with them. Affect almost always connotes this depth in the human soul and the rise and fall of its undercurrents, as they guide one’s disposition and let it burst open in different episodes.

**Notes**

1 In addition to pleasure and pain, Spinoza uses love and hate when he defines emotions; love and hate are derived, respectively, from pleasure and pain (1989: 140).

2 There are many possible combinations of emotions, but the ones that pull the psyche apart can have a tremendous emotional toll from which the person who feels it may not pull through.

3 For a discussion of the concept of event, see Grant Farred’s book *In Motion, At Rest: The Event of the Athletic Body.* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).
4 I must include here another approach to ‘affect,’ that is common in cognitive psychology. Here is a sample: “Affect, also referred to as core affect, is the basic substrata of consciousness, its most elementary constituent” (Eklund and Tenenbaum 2014: 16). I would have said it is the basic substrata of unconsciousness. The description, however, continues with what we may attribute to unconscious processes: “Affect has a distinctive experiential quality that does not consist of nor require cognition or reflection. It is an inherent and necessary ingredient of emotions and moods . . .” The author suggests that affects are farther removed from the rational, and are connected to emotions and moods. So far, I find this accurate. Then he writes: “Rather, it is always accessible to conscious awareness . . .” I would rather suggest that affects are rarely and hardly or with difficulty accessible to conscious awareness. They are deeply rooted in our physiological functions and psychic registers, or even better in our psychosomatic constitution, because we are neither solely physical nor solely psychical beings. I write this last part in response to a possible question such as this one: “Aren’t you conscious of a physiological state like exhaustion or hunger?” Well, our psychosomatic constitution is way more complex than such states. And affects cannot be understood in strictly physiological terms.

**Bibliography**


In sporting terms, attack and defense would be, respectively, the expansion of and resistance to the sporting power. Finally, in simplistic terms and in terms of its *Gestalt*, power can be active or reactive (this is what we inherited from our past but must be overcome) and both of these *Gestalts* of power have their concomitant emotions. However, there are no words in English or German which stand for these types of emotions. They would be a mixture of emotions already known in current usage; for instance, reactive emotion is a blend of revenge and ‘ressentiment.’

**Note**

1 I have discussed this issue in my essay ‘Nietzsche, Sport, and Contemporary Culture’ (2017).

**Bibliography**


not. In the case of human beings who are endowed with values, it is impossible to assess what is ‘natural’ and what is ‘cultural.’ Even if such could be distinguished, emotions of every kind have been ‘carved into’ civilization for so long that they have become ‘natural,’ or instinctual. We have made such into instincts. It would take, if not an equally long period, at very least a great length of time to free ourselves of such acculturated emotions. Such would also differ from individual to individual, depending upon their degree of strength, will, determination, physiological composition, etc.

I do not suggest that I have created a complete theoretical framework here; nor was that my aim. However, I believe it has given me sufficient ground to approach and explore many issues that emerge in sport regarding emotions and their expressions.

Notes
1 Despite his stance against the rationalization of sentiments, Hume too suffers from the moralization of human emotions, a trend that goes as far back as Socrates and Plato. Human emotions cannot be confined to the parameters of morality. There are many emotions that have little to do with moral action, right or wrong, not to mention the fact that the deeper strata of emotions, such as affects, do not have a causal relationship to moral action. Therefore, we have to learn how to view emotions in and of themselves. In this regard, I consider the French aphorists (ironically called ‘moralists,’ which has a different sense than the term ‘moral’) to be the first ‘phenomenologists’ of human emotion (phenomenologist in spirit, not method). I did not, could not, benefit from their insights in this book, because it was beyond the scope of my inquiry.
2 Although Hume, like other British philosophers, belongs to the line of passions and sentiments (Descartes could be listed here as well) and Kant belongs to the line of affects (along with Spinoza), these two terms are inter-translatable. Their ideas overlap and explain different dimensions of the same phenomenon.
3 For a taxonomy of emotions (or affective states) in Kant’s *Anthropology*, the reader can refer to Deimling’s ‘Kant’s Pragmatic Concept of Emotions’ in *Kant on Emotion and Value*, page 110.
4 It is suggested that Kant gave more room for emotions in his early lectures, where he acknowledged the role of moral feelings in moral motivation (Deimling in Cohen 2014: 117).

Bibliography


and, as such, it is wrought with the primary human emotions of fear, despair, sadness, joy, anxiety, and suffering. It is a field where one could become who one is, where one could re-fashion a life for one’s self, but it has to be done while such primary emotions are also worked out and worked up to higher realms.

Notes
1 It is important to keep in mind that so-called existentialist thinkers such as Kierkegaard and Heidegger use the term ‘Angst’ (translated as ‘anxiety’) differently than the way it is used in most psychological literature.
2 My disagreement with Fry lies in where the line is drawn. He is more cautious than me about accepting ‘hate’ in sports.
3 One good example of this type of transfiguration of fear into anxiety is from Norwegian athletes and their activities and achievements in high-risk winter sports.
4 There have been many debates in the medical community about boxing and its short- and long-term injurious effects on boxers. This topic was explored by Ken Sheard in ‘Pain and Injury in Boxing’ in the anthology edited by Loland (2006). As Sheard shows, the medical community is split on this subject, but the more important question is why it is the medical establishment, or any other not related to sport or boxing, that makes an ethical decision on a sporting subject. Furthermore, from a philosophical standpoint, one could argue that the infliction of harm has its own place in culture and cultural activities, including sports, and would be ethically sound as long as it has a context, has levels (weight levels in boxing), and happens among more or less equals. The unintentional harm inflicted in many other fields of sport must be considered if one wishes to address this question with any degree of equity.
5 I argued for this position in my essay published in the anthology Nietzsche and Transhumanism and showed how the desire to eliminate all pain and suffering lacks an understanding of deeper human emotions. Such desire is propelled by utopianism, which, philosophically, is bankrupt. It is rooted in a linear conception of time which neglects the cyclical and repetitive nature of all that is, as formulated in Nietzsche’s idea of the eternal return of the same, and in other philosophers’ conceptions of time. Self-knowledge of who we are must be closely bound by our strife to evolve and to excel. All sport practice also supports this fundamental philosophical wisdom.
6 Suffering here is only thought of in one way. To be passionate is also a form of suffering; so, anyone who wishes to live a passionate existence has to be willing to suffer. There is no passion without suffering. The very word passion comes from the Late Latin passionem (nominative passio) ‘suffering, enduring’ from past participle stem of Latin pati ‘to endure, undergo, experience’ a word of uncertain origin. The meaning strong emotion, desire is late 14th century, from Latin’s render of the Greek pathos. One can think too of the suffering one often endures when training as an athlete, which is often not pleasant, a necessary form of suffering to reach higher degrees of self-mastery.
Bibliography


In conclusion for this chapter, most of the emotions discussed here are low-energy emotions, which can disturb or retard the spirit of competitive sport, with the exception of two: positive envy, relating to other’s sufferings in an uplifting way (whether it is empathy or compassion) and shame. They are included here, because they are the antidotes (or counterparts) of emotions listed in this chapter: negative (or spiteful) envy, pity, and guilt.

Notes

1 There is no evidence of widespread suicide in sport. On the other hand, it would be difficult to conclude whether those athletes who attempted to or committed suicide did so due to sport-related reasons.
2 I have discussed this issue at length in a paper (Tuncel 2015).
3 Nietzsche makes a distinction between ‘immediate’ revenge and ‘mediated’ revenge in Human, All Too Human. In the former, one is strong enough to fight back against a harm, which, in fact, does not turn into a feeling of revenge. In the second case, one cannot respond and harbors the thought of retaliating against the person who inflicted harm (common among groups subjected to harm and mistreatment such as children, persecuted groups, etc.). This is what is properly called ‘revenge.’ Nietzsche’s distinction is crucial to show the origin and the affect of revenge.
4 French uses the term ‘revanche’ for return game, which has very little to do with revenge as a human emotion. What I like in this usage is the transfiguration from the politics of war-making (this was how the term was used initially) to the playing field of sport.

Bibliography


**Web links**


www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/othersports/athletics/2360388/Holmes-is-classic-case-of-athletes-depression.html
Notes

1 I dealt extensively with the problems of spectacle in our age in my book, *Towards a Genealogy of Spectacle*. This is another area of hermeneutic circle where a field of culture reflects the problems of society and in return contributes to its formation.

2 One example for the loss of honor and the shame it induced from recent past is Kokichi Tsuburaya who “ultimately killed himself over his failure to win the Gold before his countrymen at the Tokyo Olympics” of 1968 (Lynne Belaief 1977: 55). Regarding this case (and other similar cases) we should exercise caution in coming to hasty conclusions, especially when we do not know the details.

3 There were no team sports in the Panhellenic games of ancient Greece. This still remains a puzzle to solve. One may look at this issue from a logistic perspective and suggest that the kinds of sports ancient Greek athletes played were not conducive to team sports; on the other hand, from an emotional standpoint, one could explain it by way of individualistic nature of the emotion of honor and shame.

Bibliography


are many ways to work on the uncut wood without creating vicious circles in the traps of affectivity.

**Notes**

1  This phrase, though borrowed from Flaubert, was suggested by Cesar Torres at the 43rd annual IAPS conference in Cardiff (2015). It fits very well with this theme and I thank him for the suggestion.

2  The term is borrowed from ancient Taoism in which every human being is considered potentiality to be worked on.

3  For the reactive (of the slave morality or the morality of good and evil) there is only one absolute truth and all else is to be judged and condemned based on this one Truth; whereas for the active (of the master morality or the morality of good and bad), there are many truths and hierarchy of goods and bads in a given constellation (Nietzsche's seeming dualism is only heuristic and does not suggest an ontological dualism in morality). According to the latter, there are many diverse paths and diverse truths. This polysemic aspect of what is true stems from the nature of polytheism and is often expressed by the poets: “Various men excel, indeed, in various ways; but it is meet that man should walk in straight paths, and strive according to his powers of nature” (Pindar N-I, 25–30). And Bacchylides: “Each man seeks a different road to glory . . . We all tread different paths” (Ode X). We are different and tread different paths, but agree and come together to strive higher in the fields that conform to our **physis** and honor that struggle. This is the teaching of the ‘agonal’ poets and their age.

4  There is also a reactive type of justice that Nietzsche critiques; the underlying feeling of this type of justice is revenge (revenge of a certain kind, that of impotence) because its aim is to equalize that which is unequal (the weak and the strong alike). This is the justice of the rabble (its revenge against the strong) as the tarantula symbolizes this type of revenge:

   The tarantulas, of course, would have it otherwise. ‘What justice means to us is precisely that the world be filled with the storms of our revenge’ – thus they speak to each other. ‘We shall wreak vengeance and abuse on all whose equals we are not’ – thus do the tarantula-hearts vow.


Zarathustra calls this the ‘tyrannomania of impotence.’ In contrast, active justice aims to hold together the striving, strong types in their agonistic relation and organizes the strong and the weak in a hierarchical relationship.

5  An older version of this idea of justice among approximately equals was presented in *Human, All Too Human* Aphorism 92. There Nietzsche had not yet arrived at a notion of ‘active justice,’ but the agonistic overtones are clearly present:

   **Origin of justice.** – Justice (fairness) originates between parties of approximate equal power, as Thucydides grasped (in the terrible
colloquy between the Athenian and Melian ambassadors): where there is no clearly recognizable superiority of force and a contest would result in mutual injury producing no decisive outcome the idea arises of coming to an understanding and negotiating over one another’s demands: the characteristic of exchange is the original characteristic of justice.

Here Nietzsche is thinking the question of justice in a general way with agon symbolism, while in the practice of ‘agon’ there is a decisive outcome.

6 In the beginning of this section, Nietzsche camps the psychologists of ‘ressentiment,’ like Dühring, with the anarchists (who believe that all are equal, that all power is corrupt, and dismiss all hierarchy) and the anti-Semites who reject Jews at the outset because of their difference and are therefore reactive.

7 In the original: “Der active, der angreifende, der übergreifende Mensch” which translates as “the active, the attacking, the overlapping or crossing-over human being.” We must imagine two boxers, wrestlers or pankratists or American football player who constantly cross over into one another during the game. Kaufmann’s translation ‘arrogance’ for übergreifende does not make any sense in this context.

8 In some of these qualifications Bertram sees a biological determination and sophistic elements in Nietzsche. Discussing the same passages he writes:

Here Nietzsche clearly approaches the biologically determined, dialectically refined conception of justice that the Greek sophist Thrasymachus advances in Plato’s Republic when he defines what is just as that which benefits the stronger and what is unjust as something more powerful, noble, and mighty than justice.

(Nietzsche: Attempt at a Mythology, 81)

It is not clear to me how Nietzsche’s active justice that takes a noble and a bodily affirmation of life in contest as its starting point resembles Thrasymachus’ benefit oriented sense of justice (the benefit idea is repeated throughout his arguments). On the other hand, the biological determination must not be accepted prima facie. It is not only the body and the life forces that are determining in themselves for Nietzsche, but rather what human beings do with them in their own cultural constellations. The Greeks of the agonal age created cults, institutions, and practices (acts of culture) to allow for bodily freedom and discharge of animal instincts (acts of the body). In this way they revered the sacred animal in man.


Bibliography


who are in positions of power prefer not to expose the abuses of their co-powers simply because they too may be subject to scrutiny and lose their position. The fear of loss of power or power position may be connected to self-preservation, shame and/or guilt, which include such issues as honor, prestige, fame, etc. Those who remain silent in cases of abuse of power are also complicit by way of their silence; this should not be forgotten. The problem resides at the roots and has to be addressed from ground up and with an open discussion on how power works and how it connects with our psychosomatic constitutions, including repression. In repressive power relations, the emotional expressions may be silenced; and this creates a major problem for the economy of psychosomatic expenditure and in human well-being and relations.

In conclusion, emotions can be treated, cared for, and healed. Most researchers, philosophers, and psychologists would agree that rage, revenge (in its mediated form), excessive jealousy (the type that leads a lover to kill his/her lover), and excessive guilt (where we always seek someone or something to blame especially when the problem is a shared problem) are emotions that are highly problematic, both for the one who harbors them and for his/her milieu in which they are expressed, in our case, for the sporting community. As Goldie observes, emotions, moods, and character traits are intertwined in the narrative of a person’s life (2003: 37); to work on one’s emotions also means to work on one’s self, to see and accept oneself as always transforming, just like the sporting field. As for healing emotions, one must always contextualize it and understand its origin, object, and circumstance. Such contextualization will help its therapeutic intervention.

**Bibliography**


motivation must be sought in this area of psychic feelings, before we can even examine why and how they feel such and such emotion.

In conclusion of this chapter, let it suffice to say that there is a congruity, a correlation, if not a casual relationship, between emotion and action. There are also conditions of possibility of feeling emotions; I adduced six areas for these conditions, as shown previously, each of which needs to be studied in its own right. One does not feel emotions in void, but rather due to these psychosomatic, mental, linguistic, temporal, and spatial conditions that are both given and yet appropriated by individuals.

Epilogue for Part III

Emotional well-being, performance, sportsmanship, and the spirit of sport

Every type of sport is unique and demands its own sets of skills; so is the athlete with his/her unique emotional being. There is a set of emotions, often uplifting, high-energy emotions, that enable athletes to function at their highest capacity. This is applicable to the general mood of athletes and their disposition to the competition as they enter it, for instance, their ability to handle their fear and anxiety. Although this subject was addressed previously, there is another context for anxiety in which it is presented, often in psychological literature, in its debilitative effect. Here anxiety can prevent athletes from fulfilling their better performance. Furthermore, there are emotions that enable them to play well such as ambition to win and pride in one’s success, but also to play well together such as controlled anger and ambition, and moderated, self-reflective blame. Lastly, there are emotions that are in congruence with the sporting tasks at hand. For instance, high levels of arousal as one finds in anxiety, anger, and excitement, can increase anaerobic power and, therefore, can be good for jumping. On the other hand, increased arousal may not be good for tasks that require fine motor control, balancing, and concentration as in weightlifting, golf, and archery (Thatcher, Jones, and Lavallee 2014: 43–48).

Bibliography


and investigate the origin and quality of those emotions; although we feel emotions, they occur in the rudimentary registers of the human soul and body, as they produce and disseminate various affects; these affects take their place in lateral and vertical power relations. This theoretical framework, which I use in this book, covers a substantial territory, but it is far from complete. Also, there are instances when it is best to withdraw from a conflict with intense emotions, where remaining in such a conflict would only bring more harm and produce more negative affects. In such cases, it may be best to follow the Stoic and Taoist approaches of ‘apathia’ and ‘wu wei wu’; the former teaches us to be detached our immediate circumstances and the latter promotes the idea of ‘no action.’ Even if detachment may not be the best thing to do for a situation (especially from the standpoint of emotional therapy), remaining in the conflict will not help us manage the emotional problem insofar as we are implicated in that problem. Sometimes we are deadlocked in conflicts and the emotional problems they perpetuate; this happens because we are unable to withdraw from the conflict for different reasons. If we learn how to withdraw, we can at least prevent the problematic emotion to be fed with its object all the time. Having deprived the object of that emotion, what remains to do is to go to the root of that emotion.

Finally, human beings, including athletes and other members of the sporting community, are distinct configurations of unique emotions. In unusual circumstances, as in competitive sports when the stakes are high and when the games are ‘dangerous,’ intense emotions will always be felt and expressed, often without any reserve. Hence, we cannot escape our emotional composition. However, we can be introspective about our emotions and be sensitive to the kinds of affects they may produce and be more mindful of the effect they can have upon others.

**Bibliography**


