


Antik Olimpiyatlar'da Görünür Damgalanmış Kimlikler: Kadınlık, Kölelik ve Bedensel Engellilik

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Özet

Bu çalışma, Goffman'ın damga teorisine dayanarak kadınların, kölelerin ve bedensel engelli bireylerin antik Olimpiyat Oyunları'ndan dışlanmalarını tartışmaktadır. Ayrıca kalokagathia idealinin güzellik, atletizm ve erdem algısını nasıl etkilediğini, hiyerarşileri nasıl güçlendirdiğini ve idealize edilen imaja uymayanların damgalanmalarına nasıl yol açtığını incelemektedir. Kadınlık, kölelik ve bedensel engellilik antik Yunan toplumlarının görünür damgalanmış kimlikleri olmuştur. Antik Yunan'da bedensel güzelliği ahlaki ve entelektüel mükemmellik ile bütünleştiren bir ideal olan kalokagathia, toplumsal standartların temelini oluşturmuştur. Ancak bu ideal, yalnızca iyi bir soydan gelen özgür erkeklerle uygulanarak dışlayıcı bir nitelik taşımakta; öte yandan kadınlar, köleler ve bedensel engelliler fizyonomik gerekçeler ve vücut ısısı ayrımlarına dayalı damgalamalarla karşı karşıya kalmaktaydı. Damgalama, sağlam bedene sahip erkek standardından fiziksel sapmalara dayanmaktaydı. Kalokagathia idealinin ardında gizlenen fizyonomik anlayış, damgalamayı yeniden üretmişti. Vücut ısısı, ayrımcı uygulamaların biçimlenmesinde önemli bir rol oynamış; sıcaklık erdemlerle ilişkilendirilmiş ve erkek bedeni üstün sayılmıştı. Kadınlar daha soğuk bedenleri nedeniyle aşağı görülmüş, köleler ise soğuk ve aciz olarak değerlendirilerek toplumsal hiyerarşiler pekiştirilmişti. Kadınlar ve köleler normatif olmayan vücut sıcaklıkları nedeniyle atletik ideallerden dışlanırken bedensel engelliler çirkin ve deforme olmuş bedenleri nedeniyle dışlanmıştı. Bu bakımdan antik Olimpiyatlar, yalnızca sağlam bedene sahip erkeklerin atletik yeteneklerini sergiledikleri halka açık etkinliklerdi. Antik Yunan Olimpiyatları'nda kadınların görünürlüğü sadece temsili düzeydeydi. Halka açık atletik etkinliklere katılımları kısıtlanan kadınlar, antik Olimpiyat Oyunları'nda da katı yarışma yasaklarına tabiydi. Sadece atlı araba yarışlarında evli olmayan kadınlar için birtakım istisnalar söz konusuydu. Kyniska, milattan önce 396 yılında ilk kadın Olimpiyat şampiyonu olarak tarihe geçse de kadınların Olimpiyat Oyunları'na temsili katılım olanakları varlıklı ve statü sahibi olanlarla sınırlı kalmıştı. Antik Yunan'da spor, özgür vatandaşlar ile köleler arasında bir ayırım aracı olarak hizmet etmekteydi. Antik Olimpiyatlar'ın anonim figürleri olan köleler, sadece sahipleri adına at ve araba yarışlarına katılabilmekteydi. Bazı yerel festivaller kölelerin atletik etkinliklere katılmasına izin vermiş olsa da Olimpiyat Oyunları gibi büyük ölçekli etkinlikler kölelerin doğrudan yarışmalarını yasaklayarak dışlanmalarını vurgulamıştı. Bu damgalamaya dayalı atletik dışlanma, kölelerin kendilerini antik Olimpiyatlar'da yarışmacı olarak temsil etmelerini imkânsız hale getirmekteydi. Öte yandan bedensel engelliler antik Olimpiyatlar'da yarışma fırsatından tamamen mahrum bırakılmışlardı; ne temsili ne de anonim olarak yarışabilme olanağına sahiptiler. Çünkü antik Yunan toplumlarına özgü felsefi idealler, mitler, dini kalıp yargılar ve kurban ritüelleriyle pekiştirilen toplumsal yapılara gömülü olan bedensel engellilere yönelik ayrımcı uygulamalar, bedensel engellilerin antik Olimpiyatlar'dan tamamen dışlanmalarına yol açmaktaydı. Sonuç olarak, antik Yunan idealleri ve toplumsal yapıları tarafından cinsiyet, sosyal statü ve bedensel yetenek temelinde damgalanan kadınlar, köleler ve bedensel engelliler antik Olimpiyatlar'ın ötekileri olarak konumlandırılmaktaydı.

Anahtar kelimeler: Antik olimpiyatlar, Damga, Kalokagathia, Kadınlık, Kölelik, Bedensel engellilik.

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Conspicuous Stigmatized Identities in the Ancient Olympics: Femininity, Slavery, and Physical Disability

Abstract

This study discusses the exclusion of women, slaves, and physically disabled individuals from the ancient Olympics, focusing on Goffman's theory of stigma. It also delves into how *kalokagathia* influenced beauty, athleticism, and virtue, reinforced hierarchies and stigmatized those who did not fit the idealized image. Femininity, slavery, and physical disability were the conspicuous stigmatized identities of ancient Greek societies. In ancient Greece, the concept of *kalokagathia*, intertwining physical beauty with moral and intellectual excellence, formed the basis of societal standards. This ideal, however, was exclusive, applying only to free men of good heritage, while women, slaves, and the physically disabled faced stigmatization based on physiognomic reasoning and body temperature distinctions. The stigma was based on physical deviations from the able-bodied male standard. The physiognomic concept hidden behind the ideal of *kalokagathia* reproduced the stigma. Body temperature played a significant role in shaping discriminatory practices, associating warmth with virtues and deeming the male body superior. Women were considered inferior due to their colder bodies, and slaves were viewed as cold and incapable, reinforcing social hierarchies. Women and slaves were excluded from athletic ideals because of their non-normative body temperatures, while the physically disabled were excluded due to their ugly/deformed bodies. The ancient Olympics showcased able-bodied men displaying their athletic arete. Women's visibility in the ancient Greek Olympics was only representative. Restricted from participating in public athletic events, women were also subject to strict prohibitions on competition in the ancient Olympic Games. Only in the chariot races were exceptions made for unmarried women. While Kyniska emerged as the first female Olympic champion in 396 BCE, opportunities for representative participation in the Olympic Games were limited to women of wealth and status. Sport in ancient Greece served as a means of distinguishing between free citizens and slaves. Slaves, the anonymous figures of the ancient Olympics, could only participate in horse and chariot races on behalf of their owners. Although some local festivals allowed slave participation in athletic activities, major events like the Olympic Games prohibited direct competition for slaves, emphasizing their exclusion. This stigma-based athletic exclusion made it impossible for slaves to represent themselves as competitors in the ancient Olympics. The physically disabled, on the other hand, were completely deprived of the opportunity to compete in the ancient Olympics; they could compete neither representatively nor anonymously. Discriminatory practices against the physically disabled, embedded in social structures reinforced by philosophical ideals, myths, religious stereotypes and sacrificial rituals, resulted in them remaining completely absent from the ancient Olympics. Consequently, stigmatized by ancient Greek ideals and social structures on the basis of gender, social status, and ableism, women, slaves and the physically disabled were positioned as the others of the ancient Olympics.

Keywords: Ancient olympics, Stigma, Kalokagathia, Femininity, Slavery, Physical disability.

Introduction

Social norms created by the ruling majority have determined who occupies a place in society and who is considered invisible. Norms that discredit socially excluded identities by subjecting them to stigma have been expressed in the normative practices of the ruling majority. Femininity, slavery, and physical disability were marginalized identities in ancient Greek society. These unconcealable identities were the stigmatized and discredited identities of ancient Greek society, in which indicators of aesthetic capital were idealized as embodied by a virtuous soul and mind.

On the other side, there were credited identities. Members of the credited identities were those with the ability to achieve the kalokagathia ideal, that is, the beautiful and good. A beautiful body was the capital that paved the way for members with credited identities to become kalokagathos. Because, in the ancient Greek ideal, people thought that what was good was inherently beautiful. By contrast, people without physical capital, that is, those who were ugly, had to inevitably be bad. It was likely that the ideal of kalokagathia exposed ancient Greek society to the halo effect. Kalokagathia, an ideal that only free and able-bodied Greek men could aim for, encouraged those who were capable of achieving this ideal to develop their full physical, psychological, and intellectual potential. However, it caused women, slaves, and physically disabled people, who were stigmatized as being physically flawed, to be depicted as morally flawed as well. Kalokagathia was thus a discriminatory social phenomenon that served to reinforce the symbolic capital of men with trusted identities while promoting symbolic violence by creating and revitalizing legalized stigmas. The practice of kalokagathia reinforced the inferiority of “social others” while also making more explicit the dominance of male power held by free, able-bodied, and “inherently superior” men who had the potential to meet the requirements of the ideal. The conspicuous stigmatized identities of women, slaves, and the physically disabled made them invisible in the ancient Olympic Games, reflecting the exclusionary nature of the kalokagathia ideal in Panhellenic festivals. After all, the ancient Olympics were public events in which able-bodied Greek men showed off their physical capital.

The existing literature on the ancient Olympic Games has discussed the Games from various aspects, such as philosophical, historical, political, mythological, athletic, and architectural (e.g., Barringer, 2005; Crowther, 2007; Dillon, 2002; Swaddling, 2000; Toohey & Veal, 2007). However, publications focusing on the sociological roots of the ancient Olympics remain quite scarce. Therefore, based on Goffman’s theory of stigma, we discuss the inferior status of women, slaves, and the physically disabled in ancient Greek societies and their invisibilities at the ancient Olympics. For this purpose, first, we explain the definition of stigma and stigmatized identities. Then, we discuss the ideal of kalokagathia as a way of reproducing stigma. Last, we discuss the invisibility of women, slaves, and the disabled in the ancient Olympics.

Stigma and Stigmatized Identities

The term stigma coined by the ancient Greeks was used to describe a genuine mark that is branded on a person's skin with a hot iron or incised with a sharp knife to declare that its bearer had a low moral status, that he was a slave, criminal or traitor, discredit, flawed, and

must be avoided in public (Goffman, 1963, p. 1; Major & Eccleston, 2005, p. 64; Neuberg et al., 2000, p. 31). Although the term is used today in a similar way to its literal meaning, it is mainly used to refer to the discrediting aspect of the stigma rather than its physical evidence (Goffman, 1963, p. 1, 2). However, current definitions of stigma, which focus on symbolic meaning, consider the stigmatization process in a social context.

Erving Goffman, who paved the way for the concept of stigma to have sociological significance, conceptualized stigma as a mark that discredits a person, turning him or her from a whole and ordinary person into a tainted and degrading one (Goffman, 1963, p. 3). As stated by Schwartz, for stigma to occur, a person must be marginalized by a “mark” that leads the person to be placed in a different position in the thoughts of others than so-called normal people and to be discredited by the idea of being disgraceful or even immoral (Schwartz, 1956). Brown, McCree, and Eke (2011, p. 660) define stigma as an unfavorable social label that has the power to marginalize those considered unfit or threatening because of their presence, while also representing perceptions and people's attitudes in a negative way. Giddens and Sutton (2018, p. 319) describe stigma as degrading physical and social characteristics that are socially unacceptable and bring humiliation, social exclusion, and discrimination. According to Major et al. (2018, p. 3), stigma is a manifestation of social power, a marker given by society to differentiate the person who carries it from others and to portray that person as a deviant deserving of devaluation.

Stigmatization is the belief that a person exhibits certain negative characteristics that represent a devalued social identity in a particular social context (Crocker et al., 1998, p. 505). Emphasizing that stigmatization operates at the intersection of culture, power, and difference, Parker and Aggleton (2003) state that it is not enough to define discrimination solely in terms of an isolated phenomenon or individual manifestations, and it will only be possible to understand stigmatization by exploring the relationship between these three phenomena. Indeed, those who have access to social, economic, and political power potentially hold the power to stigmatize, while those with less power are vulnerable to the threat of stigmatization (Bos et al., 2013; Link et al., 2018, p. 2; Pryor & Reeder, 2011, p. 790).

Stigma has two aspects: on one side, there is the stigmatized person; on the other side, there is society itself and its perception of normality (Slattery, 2002, p. 190). Stigma is associated with a certain social context rather than an inherent characteristic of its bearer (Abrams et al., 2005, p. 5; Bos et al., 2013). Therefore, it is derived from established meanings specific to a particular historical period and culture (Visser & Sipsma, 2013, p. 207). Although stigma essentially defines the ‘other’ (Pryor & Reeder, 2011, p. 790), personal

rejections based on private preferences are not considered stigmatization (Kurzban & Leary, 2001). The reason is that stigma is depending on the common values and preferences of the members of a certain group (Kurzban & Leary, 2001).

Goffman distinguishes three types of stigmas. The first is the abominations of the body, that is, the stigma caused by various bodily deformities. The second type of stigma indicates blemishes of individual character, including weakness of will, domineering or unnatural passions, vicious and rigid beliefs, and dishonesty. Mental illness, imprisonment, addiction, alcoholism, homosexuality, unemployment, suicide attempts, and radical political behaviors can pave the way for the stigmatization of the individual in terms of individual character flaws. Finally, there is tribal stigma related to race, nation, and religion, which can be inherited from generation to generation and taint whole family members (Goffman, 1963, p. 4).

Gender has not always been stigmatized. The question of whether the female gender is a devalued social identity is largely contextual. Women are stereotyped as being more narcissistic, less intelligent, and less ambitious than men in terms of Goffman's "character flaws". Women have been profoundly stigmatized in certain cultures and times just for having a female body. That is, whether the female gender is regarded as a devalued identity and furthermore, whether a woman is stigmatized as a result of this, was determined by community-specific contextual clues (Quinn, 2006, p. 92).

Goffman distinguishes members of a stigmatized social identity as discredited and discreditable. The main point of this distinction is whether one's differentness is conspicuous or concealable. Having a person's differentness known to others before an interaction or immediately demonstrated during an interaction discredits that person (Goffman, 1963, p. 41). However, if the difference is not instantly obvious and is not known in advance, the person is not discredited but discreditable (Goffman, 1963, p. 42).

People with a concealable stigma, as opposed to those with a conspicuous stigma, have more control over when and to whom they disclose their differentness. This level of control offers several advantages. For instance, people with a concealable stigmatized identity can choose to disclose it in settings where they feel comfortable and safe. They can also choose not to disclose their identities in settings where they are concerned about negative reactions. So that they do not have to constantly be on the alert for prejudice and discrimination like people with a conspicuous stigma (Quinn, 2006, p. 84).

Kalokagathia: The Ideal Way of Reproducing the Stigma

The value ascribed to the body in ancient Greece was based on the belief that the gods had human images, and therefore the body was a model of excellence (Varga, 2005).

This thought held that physical beauty and moral and intellectual excellence were inseparable, as reflected in the concept of kalokagathia (kalos = beautiful and agathos = good) (Varga, 2005). Translated into English as “the beautiful and the good”, kalokagathia, originally an aristocratic ideal, implied qualities such as moral and spiritual excellence, harmony, skill, balance, and grace (Crowther, 2007, p. 58). The ideal citizen for the ancient Greeks, who believed that physical beauty was inseparable from moral excellence, was “kalos kagathos”, or the beautiful and the good one (Estin & Laporte, 2004, p. 50). Greek moral standards thus attempted to place kalokagathia at the center (Takács, 1992).

Kalokagathia, described by Aristotle as “the virtue (aretē) emerging from a combination of virtues (aretai)”, that is, “excellent virtue” (Reid, 2020), reflected the unity and harmony of physical beauty and moral value (Dürriegl, 2002). Since physical beauty always depended on the ability to think, reasoning, discussion, and self-cultivation could not be considered separate from aesthetics (Sagaert, 2017, p. 25). However, it should be noted that kalokagathia was not a quality of the body; rather, it was an ideal of virtue represented by the athletic body (Reid, 2020). In other words, virtue, an abstract concept, was expressed through an athletic body. Kalokagathia was also an educational ideal that connected ethics, aesthetics, and athletics (Reid, 2012). The muscularity, balance, harmony, and serenity of the athletic body were indicators of a spirit that had tamed and trained its animal nature to serve the nobler dictates of the mind (Reid, 2012).

Believing in hereditary potential, Aristotle emphasized that athletic excellence depends on talent and action, expressing that the beauty of the pentathlete depends on the optimum development and use of his natural potential (Reid, 2020). He then maintained that nature gives people a capacity for virtue, but this capacity should be developed through education (ethos) (Reid, 2020). Aristotle's virtuous pentathlete built up his beauty in public gymnasia, learned fairness via competition, established long-lasting friendships, and sacrificed his hard work in the service of the greater community (Reid, 2010). However, gymnasiums were available only to young men; Aristotle excluded women from gymnasium (Reid, 2010). In ancient Greece, athletes symbolized youthful, strong, and independent Greek males (Bertolin-Cebrian, 2020, p. 12), participating in athletic competitions was considered a test and proof of having arete (Zowisło, 2010).

As an ideal to be achieved through education and lifestyle, kalokagathia only concerned men of good heritage; female, ugly, and malformed bodies were excluded from this ideal (Dürriegl, 2002). A physiognomic concept was hidden behind the kalokagathia ideal (Weiler, 2002). An ancient physiognomic concept made it possible to explain the psychic constitution of a person based on physiological characteristics (Meeusen, 2017, p. 202). The physiognomic background of the kalokagathia ideal also shaped the meanings attributed to bodily defects. For instance, when a person was discredited because of his bodily differences, this did not merely indicate the existence of a bodily stigma; bodily ugliness was also a tangible clue to character flaws. Since body and soul were not considered separately, the anti-kalokagathos was the one whose body and character were both discredited. From the idealistic perspective of ancient Greece, the source of the stigma was not particular; hence, there was no purely bodily or moral stigma. Any stigma based on the ugliness of the body derived from physiognomic reasoning inherently implied a potential character flaw.

Ancient Greek society's belief in body temperature is an important reference point for better understanding body stigma as a legitimate basis for the moral stigma, namely the "physiognomic stigma". The ancient Greeks believed that body temperature determined a person's ability to see, listen, act, react, and even speak; therefore, having a warm body temperature was more valuable than a cold body (Sennett, 2008, p. 36). The male body was warm, strong, and active, while the female body was cold, weak, and passive; therefore, the female body was an inferior form of the male body (King, 2002, p. 7). Due to being naturally wet, the woman was physically, mentally, and especially emotionally weak and unstable (Carson, 1990, p. 139). The process of sex formation was also associated with body temperature; it was believed that the fetus that warmed up well in the womb at the beginning of pregnancy would be a boy, and the one who was deprived of this first heat would be a girl (Sennett, 2008, p. 34). There was a stereotype that the female sex was a deformed man (Lee, 2015, p. 36). Such stereotypes clearly reflected the able-bodied male standard. The Greeks used the science of body temperature to determine the rules of domination and obedience (Sennett, 2008, p. 28). For instance, women, considered colder versions of men, were not allowed to move around the city as freely as men; moreover, women often had to live a closed life inside the house, as if unlit interiors were more suitable to female physiology than open, sunlit areas (Sennett, 2008, p. 27). In a similar vein, Aristotle argued that while the male body could tolerate nudity and exposure to open air, the female body could not (Sennett, 2008, p. 35). A man was made for "work outside in the open air", and a woman for "things within" (Carson, 1990, p. 156).

The stigmatization practices, which were attempted to be rationalized based on differences in body temperature, were also reinforced by the gender-based standards of athletic aesthetics which were the bodily manifestation of the ideal of kalokagathia. Ancient Greek athletic aesthetics, tied to the male body, and gender roles, were not independent of arete (Reid, 2012). While athletic aesthetics as a masculine attribute was an expression of the arete of the spirit, the female body was excluded from athletic aesthetics, as the female soul was seen as inadequate and unsuitable for athletic arete (Reid, 2012). Physical excellence clearly referred to men, whereas women's social status pushed them outside the ideal (Takács, 1992). The Greek athletic aesthetics was therefore represented by the masculine gender (Sagaert, 2017, p. 28).

Athletic aesthetics, which had a strong philosophical foundation associated with kalokagathia, also had a sociological aspect that reproduced the social perceptions of the discredit of female identity.

Although women had an inferior status in the Greek mindset, they were not completely excluded due to their fundamental role in the functioning of Greek society (Lee, 2015, p. 46). On the other hand, other social groups, such as slaves and the disabled, could never reach the ideal status in Greek culture (Lee, 2015, p. 46). All the moral standards associated with kalokagathia and the Olympic idea were only for a minority of Greeks; all these opportunities were available only to free citizens (Takács, 1992). Thus, the ideal of kalokagathia served as a tool for the exclusion of slaves (Weiler, 2002). This discrimination, which had physiognomic roots, was attempted to be rationalized on the basis of differences in body temperature, as it was for women and physically disabled people. In ancient Greece, body temperature helped to form an opposition between citizen and slave: on one side was the slave's body, which was atrophied and cold due to his inability to speak, and on the other was the citizen's body, which was warmed by the heat of the assembly debates (Sennett, 2008, p. 36). Slaves did not have the authority to speak in the city because their bodies were cold (Sennett, 2008, p. 59). In Aristotle's *Politics*, too, there was an innate difference between the slave and the free human body: the body of the slave was strong enough to meet simple vital needs, while the body of a free man was upright and innately possessed all the qualities necessary for political life (*Politics*, 1255a-25). The ancient Greeks believed that the conditions of slavery reduced a person's body temperature, even if the slave was a male prisoner from a noble family; that is, they believed that the slave was becoming more and more stagnant, incapable of speaking, and increasingly losing his humanity so that he was only fit to do the work that his masters would give him (Sennett, 2008, p. 28). On the other

hand, athletic aesthetics, tangible proof of arete, attributed a privileged importance to voluntary effort; the voluntary nature of the effort differentiated the athletic muscularity obtained through gymnastics from the slavish muscularity resulting from intense manual labour (Reid, 2012). The aesthetic attractiveness of athletic muscularity stemmed not only from mathematically measurable balance and harmony but also from its relation to the aristocratic willingness to strive to achieve a state of arete that could preserve the freedom of society (Reid, 2012).

Physical disability, another of the conspicuous stigmatized identities of ancient Greece, denoted a stigmatized deviation from aesthetic or functional norms throughout recorded Greek history (Parry, 2013, p. 43). Physically disabled people were subject to considerable stigma and discrimination, even if they belong to affluent and powerful families (Parry, 2013, p. 109).

The ancient Greeks' emphasis on bodily integrity played an important role in stigmatising people with physical disabilities as second-class citizens (Garland, 2009, p. 104). Such that physically disabled people fell short of aesthetic ideals (Kelley, 2007, p. 34). Given the Greek philosophical ideals of symmetry and balance as well as the Greek obsession with bodily perfection, it was not surprising that physical disability led to negative aesthetic evaluations, and deformed bodies were excluded (Lee, 2015, p. 51; Rose, 2003, p. 37). Taking *kalokagathos*, the characteristic of a flawless and noble person, in reverse reveals the idea that "an ill-proportioned body indicates a rogue" (Weiler, 2002). Thus, the victims of the so-called physiognomy of ancient Greece were faced with the reverse of the *kalokagathia* ideal (Weiler, 2002). Again, while wholeness and beauty were seen as a blessing that showed not only moral and intellectual superiority but also divine providence; physical deformity was considered a sign of rejection by the gods (David, 2017, p. 85). Having strong prejudices against congenital deformities and disabilities, the ancient Greeks dehumanized babies who were born deformed, labeling them "monsters" (Parry, 2013, p. 42). People with physical disabilities were constantly subjected to shame, stigma, disgrace, and ridicule (Garland, 2009, p. 105). Moreover, they were believed to deserve to be humiliated by able-bodied people because their ugliness revealed their evil (Meeusen, 2017, p. 219). Physically disabled people, whose existence is a source of shame for both their families and themselves, were expected to suffer in silence, demanding as little from society as possible and hiding behind the door closed (Garland, 2009, p. 105). Therefore, although there were many people with disabilities, they left very few traces in history (Garland, 2009, p. 105).

The Invisibility of Women in the Ancient Olympics

In Athenian democracy, where women were condemned to a life devoid of democratic rights and despised almost to the point of slavery, a male-dominated understanding that manifested itself rigidly and harshly prevailed (Bonnard, 2004, p. 162). According to the ancient Greek mindset, women were considered wild until they were civilized by getting married and giving birth (Reid, 2012). Aristotle's "the relation of male to female is that of natural superior to natural inferior, and that of ruler to ruled" statement in *Politics* (1254b-15) offers important clues about the secondary position of women in the masculine social structure of ancient Greece. According to Aristotle, nature assigned different kinds of virtues to men and women; the virtue of a woman was to bear and raise children (Reid, 2010). The appearance of Aristotle's thought in ancient Greek society was evident. The main duty of women in society, who were considered legitimate instruments for transmitting family heritage to future generations, was to give birth and raise a healthy son (Bonnard, 2004, p. 165; Freeman, 2003, p. 214). In contrast, male virtues could be expressed in public.

Ancient Greek men were sent to the gymnasium from an early age to build their strength and body shape. They learned how to increase their grip strength, widen their back and shoulder muscles, tighten their abdomen, stretch their arm muscles, and tighten their leg muscles and hips while wrestling. In the gymnasium, men's voices were trained as well as their muscles, and they were taught to compete verbally with each other to acquire the debate skills they would need to participate in the city's democracy. That is, training in the gymnasium taught the boys that their bodies belonged to the city and that they were part of the polis (Sennett, 2008, p. 36-39).

In some ancient Greek cities, local noble female figures were able to gain a place in the gymnasium by supporting it with donations, and they were also able to undertake the managerial task called *gymnasiarchy*. This task only required payment for the oil supply, heating, and maintenance of the buildings, without actually participating in the activities of the gymnasium. However, in some exceptional cases, women's participation was not limited to donations. For instance, during the imperial period, in Dorylaion, Smyrna, and Bergama, girls -provided that they were separated from boys- were allowed to participate in certain activities held in the gymnasium (Paganini, 2021, p. 195).

Ancient Greek public athletic competitions were primarily male events. There were also sporting events in which women participated, but they were less important than those for men. Although these events were for women, as a rule, they were restricted to virgins only; married women were not allowed to participate as competitors. They were allowed to engage

in recreational sports activities (played ball, knucklebones, etc.) in or near their homes but were not allowed to compete personally in public (Kyle, 2014, p. 271).

Women were explicitly banned from competing and watching competitions at the Olympic Games, but these prohibitions did not apply to young girls. According to the laws of Elis, any woman found present at the Olympic meeting or even crossing the nearby Alpheios River during the festival was punished by being thrown from Mount Tropaion. The only exception was the priestess of Demeter, who sat on the altar before the Olympic judges called *hellanodikai* during the festival (Dillon, 2002, p. 131).

According to Pausanias, despite the law banning women from participating in the ancient Olympic Games, a woman named Kallipateira still attended the games disguised as a male trainer to support her son. When her son Peisirodos won, she jumped over the fence that kept the trainers out of the ring, and Kallipateira's robe fell off, and it was understood that she was in disguise. However, out of respect for the Olympic victors in the ancient Greek world, Kallipateira was not given the death penalty. Because Kallipateira's father, brother, and son had been champions in the previous Olympics. Instead, a law was passed requiring trainers to enter the games naked in future Olympics (Garland, 2009, p. 264; Toohey & Veal, 2007, p. 23).

The Elis Law prohibited women from participating in the Olympic Games, excluding women's representative participation in competitions. Thus, women could participate in chariot races as horse owners, provided they were not married and were not physically present at the competition (Swaddling, 2000, p. 35). The first female Olympic champion, Kyniska, the daughter of the Spartan king Archidamos, won the Olympic victory in 396 BCE when her horses finished first in the race and then had her statue erected in Olympia (Glassman, 2017, p. 829; Sweet, 1987, p. 234; Young, 2004, p. 113). Furthermore, at the Olympic Games held in 392 BCE, she was again declared Olympic champion in the same category (Dillon, 2002, p. 289; Kyle, 2003; Younger, 2021, p. 47). However, although not as famous as Kyniska, other women had also achieved Olympic victories: Euryleonis of Sparta (368 BCE) and Belistiche of Macedon (286 BCE) had their statues erected in Olympia by winning the chariot races (Kyle, 2014, p. 267; Toohey & Veal, 2007, p. 23). However, because horse racing was traditionally monopolized by the upper classes in ancient Greek civilizations (Manetti, 2018, p. 250) and was considered 'the sport of kings and wealthy families', (Young, 2004, p. 47) women's "representative" presence in the Olympics was contingent on whether they belonged to a wealthy family. As a result, "ordinary women" continued to be invisible in public during the Olympic Games.

The Invisibility of Slaves in the Ancient Olympics

As one of the ways in which the Greeks distinguished themselves from barbarians and free citizens from slaves, sport was constantly used in the ancient Greek world to express and reinforce the distinction between free people and slaves (Golden, 2008, p. 39). Thus, slaves did not play a prominent role in Greek athletics (Crowther, 1992). In the laws of Beroea, which listed those excluded from the gymnasium, it was expressly forbidden for slaves to undress (training) in the gymnasium, and it was stated that those who violated the rule and condoned the violation of it would be severely punished (Crowther, 1992; Golden, 2008, p. 40). Yet, slaves were not completely excluded from the gymnasium. Because the main factor that marked the distinction between free and slave members of the population was to have the opportunity to undress, that is, to take education, rather than being in the gymnasium (Mann, 2004, p. 282). Although slaves could serve in the gymnasium, the fact that neither they nor their children could claim citizenship rights even if they were freed, deprived them of athletic education (Potter, 2012, p. 132).

In ancient Greece, unlike citizens, slaves could not be found in gymnasiums or palaestras for physical and mental development, but they had various roles related to these institutions to look after their masters' interests. For instance, there were domestic slaves, known as *paidagogos*, who were responsible for supervising a free Greek boy, taking him to and from the gymnasium, and also monitoring his behavior (Sweet, 1987, p. 113). The masseurs, known as *aleipte*, who treated the athletes' weakened arms and legs were also slaves (Golden, 2008, p. 58). Slaves called *palaistrophylakes* played a role as guardians of the gymnasium and palaestra (Golden, 2008, p. 58). In some cities of the Hellenistic world, *palaistrophylakes* were employed not only as guardians but also as servants and repairmen when necessary (Paganini, 2021, p. 159). *Palaistrophylakes* also served as training partners for boys in the gymnasium or palaestra (Golden, 2008, p. 65). When the boys they served were not satisfied with them, they could be sold by public decree and replaced with another slave purchased at the market (Golden, 2008, p. 62).

Regarding the role of slaves in major sports festivals in ancient Greece, they accompanied their masters who participated in the festivals as athletes or spectators. They also performed required tasks as the sanctuary staff, such as cleaning the sports facilities and preparing the sites. However, they could not participate in the competition (Mann, 2014, p. 281).

Although slaves were banned from competing in major festivals, they were not banned from all games of the ancient Greek world, so slaves could compete in local festivals (Crowther, 1992, 1996). For the Hellenistic (323-31 BCE) and Roman (31 BCE - 476 CE) periods, there is evidence that slaves participated in local athletic activities; for example, Egyptian documents dated 257 CE and the Misthia inscription in Asia Minor dates from the 2nd century CE (Mann, 2014, p. 282). Slaves could serve as jockeys or charioteers in athletic competitions on behalf of their owners (Golden, 2008, p. 44). At the Panathenaia Festival, slaves and non-Greek citizens were allowed to participate in athletic competitions, except *apobat* races (Crowther, 1992, 1996). In the ancient Olympic Games, slaves who took part as jockeys in horse races on behalf of their masters could not win the Olympic prizes, instead, the owners of the slaves were declared as Olympic champions (Crowther, 2007, p. 72; Garland, 2009, p. 262). While the owners basked in the glory of victory, the jockeys and charioteers remained anonymous (van Nijf, 2023, p. 132). Thus, they maintained their invisibility at the Olympic Games. However, having the honor of competing in the ancient Olympic Games was an experience that almost every slave dreamed of. This is because most of the charioteers who participated in the ancient Olympic Games were born slaves in the provinces - especially in Greece - and gained their freedom through earned money or public recognition (Crowther, 2007, p. 131).

The Invisibility of the Disabled in the Ancient Olympics

The meaning attributed to the body in ancient Greek culture was based on philosophical, political, socio-cultural, and mythological foundations. In the ancient Greek ideal of excellence, a healthy body was a capital that needed to be continuously developed to become an ideal citizen and achieve a godlike appearance. For the ancient Greeks, the ideal body was strong, while the flawed body was considered dangerous or to be destroyed (Le Clair, 2011). For this reason, the idea of integrating people with disabilities into society through sports in public spaces was not even mentioned in the social structure of ancient Greece. In fact, those with bodily features that did not match the ideal body perception built on able-bodied male standards were marginalized and pushed out of the public sphere, in other words, made invisible.

The ancient Greeks generally spent their time in the palaestra and gymnasium to achieve the ideal of *arete*, a unique concept that involves an ontological perfection extending

to athletics, art, and education (Ghisalberti, 2016). Physical disability, inconsistent with the eugenic ideal of embodied virtue (arete), was perceived as a flaw that moved people away from perfection and decreased their value (Hughes, 2019). Likewise, it was considered a social problem that undermined the foundations of the ideal state by the ancient Greek philosophers. For instance, in Plato's ideal state, physically disabled people had no place; they should be excluded from society and even left to die. In the Republic, Plato used the following expressions regarding physical disabilities: "This is the sort of medicine and this is the sort of law which will prevail in our state; they will be healing arts to better natures; but the evil body will be left to die by the one" (Republic, 410). In a similar vein, in Aristotle's ideal state, "there should be a law against rearing deformed ones" (Politics, 1335b-20). The eugenic approach to disability in ancient Greece was not limited to the speeches of philosophers but was also transferred to the practice of everyday life, supported by law. For instance, in Sparta, the law required the abandonment of deformed infants (Garland, 2009, p. 103).

The myths reveal a remarkable portrayal of ancient Greek culture's discriminatory attitudes toward people with disabilities. According to some legends about Hephaestus, one of the gods of Olympus, unlike other gods and goddesses distinguished by physical beauty, he was born with a limp and was considered ugly even by his own mother, Hera, such that he was thrown from Mount Olympus with great embarrassment and disgust (Ebenstein, 2006). In the Homeric narratives, warriors with arete were glorified, while those who fell short of the standards were excluded. In Homer's Iliad, the expression arete was used to refer to qualities attributed to a warrior, such as physical strength, ability to use weapons, valour in combat, and heroism (Olivova, 1983). Warriors with these qualities were depicted displaying their skills and courage in running, long jumping, boxing, wrestling, armored combat, discus and javelin throwing, archery, and chariot racing.

The ideals of arete and kalokagathia were represented by heroic warriors such as Achilles and Odysseus, men of physical virtue and linguistic wisdom (Zowisło, 2010). On the other hand, Hephaestus' lameness was also the reason for his dishonor, similarly, Thersites was marked as "the most shameful soldier" in Troy, partly because of his lameness (Brockliss, 2019).

Religious stereotypes about the origin of physical disabilities were another factor contributing to the legitimization of stigma. Physical disability was often viewed as a marking of the wrath of the gods in ancient Greek culture (Kelley, 2007, p. 43). The physically disabled, seen as scapegoats, were sacrificed to the gods to avoid disasters attributed to divine

wrath (Ogden, 1994). Those who were given the opportunity to live had to continue their lives as the stigmatized people of the society (Garland, 2018, p. 14) and were kept out of sight by being confined to home (Garland, 2018, p. 65). As expected, there were no regulations facilitating physically disabled people to participate in civic or religious ceremonies and rituals (Garland, 2009, p. 104).

While discussing the invisibility of the physically disabled in the ancient Olympics, it is necessary to draw attention to the sacred aspect of the Panhellenic Games. The social and mythological roots of invisibility can thus be better understood. In ancient Greece, the Panhellenic Games, including the Olympics, were named ‘sacred crown games’ (Manetti, 2018, p. 248). Furthermore, the ancient Greeks believed that the gods possessed all human qualities and that Olympic champions were, in a way, demigods (Koryürek, 2003, p. 6). Considering the social structure and belief system of ancient Greece, not to mention the possibility that a physically disabled person could become a demigod, even the possibility of appearing in the presence of Zeus, the god of gods, on the sacred Mount Olympus could also be an optimistic thought. Indeed, in the existing archaeological finds and literary texts, which are the source of our knowledge about the ancient Olympics, no evidence has been found that the physically disabled competed in the ancient Olympic Games.

Conclusion

Humans are social beings with an innate need for interaction in society. However, they face the risk of stigmatization when they exhibit unusual or non-normative behaviors, which devalue their social status, identity, and place within the community. Erving Goffman (1963), introducing a sociological approach to the concept of stigma, emphasizes three types of stigma: abominations of the body, blemishes of individual character, and tribal stigma. He also categorizes members of stigmatized social identities as discredited or discreditable depending on their conspicuous or concealable differentness. In ancient Greek societies, social norms constructed by free able-bodied males stigmatized several conspicuous identities such as femininity, slavery, and physical disability. Because these conspicuous stigmatized identities deviated from the able-bodied male standard of ancient Greece.

The ancient Greeks believed that the human body was a model of excellence, with physical beauty and moral excellence inseparable. Greek moral standards attempted to place *kalokagathia* at the center, reflecting the unity and harmony of physical beauty and moral value. The ideal of *kalokagathia* was only applicable to men of good heritage, and physiognomic concepts were hidden behind the ideal. Body ugliness was seen as a clue to

character flaws, and the anti-kalokagathos was the one whose body and character were both discredited. Thus, the idea of kalokagathia as a means of reproducing stigma led to the exclusion of women, slaves, and the physically disabled from public space.

This stigmatization was based on differences in body temperature. The ancient Greeks believed that body temperature influenced abilities, and that warm bodies were more valuable than cold ones. The perception that the male body was warm while the female body was cold led to the devaluation of the female body. The ancient Greeks considered the female body an inferior form of the male body, and used this to determine rules of domination and obedience. The gender-based standards of athletic aesthetics, tied to the male body, excluded women from the athletic arete. Therefore, the visibility of women in the ancient Olympic Games was only representative. The body temperature also formed an opposition between the slave's cold body and the citizen's warm body. The ancient Greeks believed that slavery reduced a person's body temperature, leading to stagnation and the loss of humanity. In ancient Greece, sports played a significant role in distinguishing free people from slaves and barbarians. Slaves were not allowed to participate in gymnasiums or palaestras for physical and mental development. They were also not allowed to compete in major festivals, such as the Olympic Games. Instead, they served as jockeys or charioteers on behalf of their owners at such festivals. Another conspicuous stigmatized identity of ancient Greece was physical disability. Ancient Greek culture viewed the body as a capital for excellence and a strong, godlike appearance. Disabled people were viewed as hazardous or to be destroyed, leading to the stigmatization of the disabled in society. Further, people with physical disabilities were subjected to shame, disgrace, ridicule, and lack of social support. The eugenic approach to disability that pervades everyday life also made disabled people invisible in the ancient Olympics.

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