

## **SPARTIAN GAMES - THE GAME MODEL OF INTEGRATION OF SPORT AND ART**

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### **Summary**

The content, special features and sociocultural and pedagogic value of SpArtian Games are presented. The concept of these Games developed in Russia continues a centuries-old tradition of search for methods of integration of two important elements of culture - sport and art.

### **1. Introduction**

The idea of integration of sport and art is not new; it arose in the Ancient Greece. As we know, the Isthmian, Panathenaic, Pythian and Nemean Games are characterized by competitions of not only sportspersons, but also singers, musicians, orators.

During the later years, the idea of integration of sport and art on the basis of strengthening of a union between them was expressed and supported by many scientists and public figures.

The founder of the modern Olympic Movement P. Coubertin was an ardent adherent to this idea. In his works he repeatedly underlined the need for complementarity and strengthening of bonds between sport and art, considering this union as one of the major social-pedagogic means of harmonious development of an individual, overcoming of increasing gap between physical and spiritual development of people. According to P. Coubertin, the Olympic Games must play an important role in strengthening of relations between sport and art. For practical implementation of the idea of integration of sport and art, P. Coubertin in 1906 suggested to include into the program of the Olympic Games art competitions (“Pentathlon of the Muses”) in 5 kinds of art: architecture, sculpture, music, painting and literature. Such competitions took place during the

Games from 1912 to 1948. In 1912, representatives of 31 countries have taken an active part in these art competitions. The 1936 Olympic Games are characterized by 15 art competitions.

The idea of Coubertin, concerning of the need for strengthening of the union of sport and art, currently is supported in wide social groups, including scientists and outstanding figures of the modern Olympic Movement. The 7th President of the IOC Juan Antonio Samaranch was the active supporter of this idea. Federico Mayor Zaragoza, the Director-General of the UNESCO from 1987 to 1999, repeatedly expressed his support of the idea of strengthening of bonds between sport and art.

In the recent decades numerous practical measures on strengthening of the union of sport and art are undertaken:

- Art in its different forms is used in sports show styling (“art background”), staging, as a specific supplement to sports competitions (for example, art features of solemn ceremonies of opening or closing of competitions, their musical background, different “sports-art shows”, etc.)
- Theatres (theatrical collectives) with participation of sportspersons - for example, theatre of ice miniatures, theatre of sports pantomime, etc., are created (one of the modern innovative shows of such type, integrating sport and art – the TV-program “Dances on Ice”, in which stars of cinema and variety master dances on ice and perform in pairs with super-professionals of figure skating)
- Exhibitions of paintings, sculptures and other art works of sportspersons are held
- Sport and art festivals, cultural-sports holidays and other similar events are held, their programs alongside with competitions of sportspersons includes performance of actors: dancers, singers, musicians, etc.

In 1990, the humanistic project under the name “SpArt” (the author of the project - prof. V. I. Stolyarov) has been developed in Russia. The acronym “SpArt”, developed by Stolyarov, can be understood doubly:

- As an acronym from three English words: **S**pirituality, **S**port and **A**rt.
- As an acronym from following phrase in Russian - the Union of Admirers of active Versatile Creative Work.

The basic idea of the project is development and introduction into practice of such forms and methods of humanistic education, health improvement, complete development of a person and organization of leisure of various groups of population, which assume humanization (increase of spiritual-moral orientation) of sport, its integration with art. In the course of practical implementation of the project “SpArt” specialists have developed and verified the complex of SpArtian forms and methods of work. The central place in this project is occupied by SpArtian Games. The concept of these Games continues the centuries-old tradition of search for ways of integration of two important elements of culture - sport and art.

The purpose of this chapter – on the basis of long-term (since 1991) experience of organization and holding of SpArtian Games, to characterize their content, special features and also sociocultural and pedagogic value.

## **2. What are SpArtian Games?**

For correct understanding of SpArtian Games, first of all, it is important to take into account the fact that the Games imply use of a specific way of organization of game rivalry.

The concept “a way (a form, a model) of rivalry organization”, for the first time introduced by the V. I. Stolyarov, characterizes principles of an approach to development of a program of competition, an entry list (a list of participants), systems of revealing and encouragement of winners (those values, norms and samples of behavior, which are encouraged during competitions, a character of this encouragement, etc.). The program of competitions can be oriented, for example, to narrow specialization of abilities of participants or to their versatile abilities; the system of encouragement of winners can be only moral or as well material; the list of participants can be limited only to people of a certain gender, age, fitness, and can be without such restrictions, etc. It is important that the character and special features of the way of organization of game rivalry essentially influence individuals and social relations.

Let us consider a way (a method) of organization of rivalry, which is used in SpArtian Games.

### **2.1. Principles of Development of a Games Program**

At the stage of development of the program of SpArtian Games organizers take into account their level (district, town, regional, inter-regional, international), duration and conditions of holding, purposes and tasks, set by organizers, and also age, gender, fitness of participants, physical/mental disabilities of sportspersons and their character, etc.

Depending on the above mentioned factors, the program of SpArtian Games can be in various forms. But at the same time it surely includes the following elements:

- 1) SpArtian overture (opening ceremony)
- 2) competitions and contests
- 3) non-competitive games
- 4) closing ceremony

#### ***The 1st element of the program: “SpArtian overture”***

The SpArtian overture is an opening ceremony of SpArtian Games.

It includes traditional elements of such ceremony - speech of organizers of the Games, representation of visitors, jury, etc. At the same time, some of them have the other character, and, more over, the program also includes some new elements.

Representation of participants is carried out as follows.

- A. Teams (one after another) appear in a hall and demonstrate to music, their original carnival masks, costumes with ornaments, etc., symbolizing versatile interests of participants, their fancy for art, science, engineering, sport, etc.

The following features of demonstration are encouraged:

- Use of theatrical requisite (masks, wigs, make-up, ballet slippers, etc.), technical devices, sports equipment (balls, rackets), etc.;
- Supplementation of demonstration by dances, acrobatics, physical exercises and also by verbal comments.

After representation, each team remains in a hall. One of its participants holds a plate with the name of the team and its attributes.

All teams form a rank for continuation of an opening ceremony of the Games: to hymn “SpArtian Country” and to hoist the SpArtian Flag (a white rectangle with blue bordering; in the center of the flag there is the SpArtian Emblem – see Fig. 1).



Figure 1. The SpArtian Emblem

The Emblem represents a combination of the letter “A” and the symbolic image of the Mobius band - a symbol of infinite motion, perfection, at the same time this band means the letter “S”. Thus, the Emblem expresses logical connection of letters “S” and “A” - initial letters of English words “Spirituality”, “Sport” and “Art”. The ends of the band represent running tracks of a stadium. In the center of the Emblem, there is a circle with vertical lines – this is a conditional image of a theatrical scene. At the same time, the word “SpArt” in Russian can be treated as an abbreviation, which consists of the first letters of words of the phrase “the Union of Admirers of Active Versatile Creative Work” in Russian. Hence, the Emblem symbolically represents aspiration of participants of the SpArtian Movement to self-improvement, harmonious and versatile development of personality, using for this purpose sport and art, focused, first of all, on spiritual-moral values.

Alongside the mentioned signs, the SpArtian Emblem can also include the words/phrases: “SpArt” or “SpArtian Movement” and SpArtian mottoes and slogans, for example: “Join the SpArtian Movement and become an all-round developed person and a patriot of your Motherland! ”; “Believe in your success and do the best for your self-perfection! ”; “Beauty of actions and acts is more important than success! ”; “Let good win! ”. These and other SpArtian mottoes and slogans have a strongly expressed

humanistic orientation. The hymn of the SpArtian Movement is a song “SpArtian country”.

***The 2nd element of the program: “Competitions and contests”***

The following general demands are made in reference to competitions and contests, included into the program of the SpArtian Games:

- They must allow one to compare and estimate parameters of physical and spiritual development of participants, their versatile abilities, demonstrated in different kinds of activity (sport, tourism, art, technical sciences, etc.)
- At selection of specific competitions and contests organizers must follow the principle of balance of those human qualities and abilities, which are necessary for participation in corresponding competitions and contests to exclude wins due to unilateral development of only physical or mental qualities, sportsmanship or art mastership, etc.
- Competitions and contests must correspond to skills and abilities of participants and must be interesting to them
- Competitions and contests must be organized so that people of any gender, fitness, etc.; could take an active part in them, including people with disabilities (physically handicapped)
- Competitions and contests must promote manifestation and development of creative abilities of participants, their familiarization with original national and domestic culture, patriotic education and also cultivation of respect (tolerance) to values of other cultures, ideologies, beliefs
- Inclusion into this program of such competitions and contests, which contradict ideals and values of humanism (threaten health of participants, humiliate dignity of an individual, etc.), is forbidden

On the basis of the above mentioned principles the program of SpArtian Games (taking into account corresponding conditions, solved problems, the list of participants, etc.) can include different competitions and contests.

They are subdivided into two groups:

- (a) SpArtian competitions and contests;
- (b) other (traditional) competitions and contests.

SpArtian competitions and contests are those, which:

- Promote manifestation and development of creative abilities of participants and their use in different kinds of activity
- Are unique in comparison with usual, traditional competitions in different kinds of sport, with art contests in different forms of art (singing, dancing, painting, etc.) and with other similar competitions and contests.

These competitions and contests are developed by the author of the concept of SpArtian Games and his colleagues and, hence, they are authorized.

In the course of long-term practice of organization of SpArtian Games different SpArtian competitions and contests have been developed and successfully used. They can be subdivided into general (obligatory for inclusion into the program of SpArtian Games) and additional (optional).

#### *The general SpArtian competitions and contests*

##### SpArt-carnival

This contest is an element of the SpArtian overture and becomes a kind of representation of participants: teams one after another come into a hall and to music demonstrate specially designed and made original carnival masks, costumes with ornaments, etc., which symbolize versatile interests of participants, their enthusiasm in the sphere of art, science, technical sciences, sport, etc. Criteria of an estimate: behavior, originality, creativity, imagination, craftsmanship in art (aesthetics, humor, etc.) at designing of masks, costumes, etc., conformity of performance to a SpArtian idea of complete (harmonious and versatile) development of a person.

##### SpArt-visiting card

Each team represents own “visiting card”, not usual, but “SpArtian”: according to optional program demonstrates different hobbies and abilities, versatile and harmonious development of team members - their fitness, sportsmanship and craftsmanship in art, oratory, technical creativity, etc. The Motto of performance of each team: “We are SpArtians and we are proud of it!” Corresponding video clips can accompany this performance. Criteria of an estimate: behavior, originality, creativity, imagination, craftsmanship in art (aesthetics, humor, etc.), conformity of performance to a SpArtian idea of complete (harmonious and versatile) development of a person.

##### SpArt-athlon

SPART-athlon is a contest in the sphere of imagination, creativity, ingenuity, humor and also aesthetics in demonstration of physical abilities and sportsmanship: each participant himself/herself defines, what physical abilities (power, flexibility, etc.) or original physical exercises and sports abilities (for example: jumping; throwing; holding of any subject (a ball, a racket, etc.) on a head), with the help of what means and methods, he/she will demonstrate (it can be lifting and throwing of different subjects, pulling up, pushing up, etc.). The task of each participant is to demonstrate maximum imagination, creativity, ingenuity, humor and aesthetics. Performance can be individual or in pairs. The number of representatives from each team and time of performance is defined by a board of referees, taking into account all applications.

This competition has 2 stages.

The 1st stage. “Homework” to participants: to prepare and demonstrate (by means of necessary subjects, accessories or without them) any physical qualities and abilities (for example: power, accuracy, flexibility, etc.) or original physical exercises and sports abilities (for example: a jump; a throw; holding of any subject (a ball or a racket, etc.)

on a head). Criteria of an estimate: behavior, originality, creativity, imagination, humor, aesthetic culture.

The 2nd stage. Improvisation. Participants perform different tasks of organizers, received directly during the Games: to think up an original and aesthetic way of demonstration of physical qualities and abilities (for example, force or accuracy, flexibility, etc.) or original physical exercises and sports abilities (for example, an unusual jump, a throw, a way of movement, etc.) with use of the subjects, specified by organizers (for example, with a hoop, balls, a racket, etc.). Criteria of an estimate: behavior, originality, creativity, imagination, humor, aesthetic culture.

### SpArt-art

This contest has 2 stages.

The 1st stage. Homework: “SpArt-musical” - the theatrical performance, in which participants demonstrate creative abilities, craftsmanship in art (aesthetics, humor, etc.), beauty of movements and plastique, using in unity various art forms (dance, vocal, poetry and oratory, etc.) and physical culture/sports activity (aerobics, acrobatics, rhythmic gymnastics, synchronous performance of physical exercises, etc.). Criteria of an estimate: behavior, originality, creativity, imagination, humor, aesthetic culture.

The 2nd stage. Improvisation: “SpArt-orchestrika”□.

Variants of tasks to participants:

- To the music specified by organizers, to demonstrate in movements feeling of the music and rhythm (an ability to express feelings and experiences, caused by music)
- To create an artistic image, playing a pantomime, clownery or a ballet sketch on the basis of the specified topic; □to a song (specified by organizers)
- To demonstrate in movements content of this song, etc.

Criteria of an estimate: behavior, originality, creativity, imagination, humor, aesthetic culture.

*\* In ancient Greece scientists understood “orchestrika” as an art of movements in the form of acrobatics, ritual, theatrical and war dances.*

### SPART-games collection

This contest has 2 stages.

The 1st stage. Homework. Participants represent purely new (invented by them) or a little bit modified well known game (competitive or non-competitive).

Modifications can concern:

- Game program
- Game rules
- Used subjects, devices, technical equipment
- System of revealing of winners

- List of participants of the game, etc.

Criteria of an estimate: behavior, originality, creativity, imagination, humor, aesthetic culture.

The 2nd stage. Improvisation. Participants must invent and demonstrate new game, performing tasks, specified by organizers (for example to use certain subjects, to develop certain rules, to provide certain panel (list) of participants, etc.).

Criteria of an estimate: behavior, originality, creativity, imagination, humor, aesthetic culture.

#### SPART-creative-fair

Each participant can submit to jury his/her own art works (author's paintings, caricatures, posters, photos, films and video films, verses, songs and other literary and music compositions, etc.), and also technical inventions, scientific works, styled clothes, invented sport equipment, etc. All works must be submitted to jury in advance, prior to the contest. Criteria of an estimate: content of represented art works, their novelty, originality, creative character, urgency, craftsmanship in art, humor.

#### Contests-nominations

So-called contests-nominations are the obligatory element of SpArtian Games. The jury estimates performance and behavior of participants in the course of the all above mentioned contests (according to certain criteria of specific nomination).

Taking into account a list of participants and corresponding tasks, the program of the Games can include different nominations, corresponding to SpArtian ideals. So, for example, it can include the following nominations:

- Creativity, imagination, ingenuity
- Humor
- Fitness and sportsmanship
- Craftsmanship in art
- Collectivism, etc.

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