

# **SPORT, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE OF PEACE**

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## **Summary**

The chapter is devoted to a discussion on the role of sport in the development and realization of values of sustainable development and culture of peace. By now, this topic attracted an increasing number of scientists and specialists-practitioners from many countries. The basic concepts and methodological principles, which are necessary for right approaches to the solution of the corresponding problems, are specified in this chapter. The characteristic of the positive social and cultural functions of sport is presented; at the same time and the author demonstrates also a conflicting feature of functions of sport. Those subjective and objective factors, which determine the role of sport in the realization of values of culture of peace for sustainable development, are also mentioned.

## **1. Introduction**

During the transition from the 20th to the 21st century, the world has faced a complex of many problems raising the question of the fate of the human society. Growing inequality between nations and inside them, poverty, diseases, illiteracy, growing environmental pollution, cruelty and violence, spread of various forms of extremism (aggressive nationalism, terrorism, totalitarian sectarianism, etc.), separatism, severe degradation of spiritual values resulting in drug addiction, prostitution, loss of spiritual and moral foundations in art and education, acute symptoms of personal estrangement and marginalization, are indicative of an impending sociocultural, ecological, spiritual and moral, crisis.

In response to this, scientists and public figures have developed two main concepts – the concept of sustainable development and the concept of culture of peace. These are focused on some approaches to overcome the above mentioned crisis which include efforts towards elimination of poverty typical for a significant part of the world, ensuring ecological safety and rational use of natural resources, cultivation and development of ecological culture, suppression of violence, etc. Moral and ethical imperatives and social responsibility are recognized as the basic conditions of sustainable safe development of each person, state and the world community as a whole. These rules should be purposefully affirmed at all social levels - from individuals through families up to international institutions.

In this situation, work of all more or less significant social institutions is subjected to an analysis from the point of view of its adequacy in terms of values of sustainable development, culture of peace and promotion of world recognized values.

Sport deserves the most persistent attention in this matter. It develops widely and involves millions of people from all over the world. Currently, sport acts as a social system, a social institution and a social movement with powerful influence practically on all strata and spheres of the modern society, modern culture including education, politics, economics, engineering, science, art, mass media, leisure, etc. Its role in the rising generation in socialization and education, formation of an image and a style of life becomes increasingly important.

Concepts of sustainable development and culture of peace raise some disturbing questions concerning intensive development of modern sport.

With reference to the concept of sustainable development, there is, mainly, the issue of simultaneous prevalence of famine, diseases and illiteracy in the Third World countries alongside expensive magnificent skating centers, golf courts and automobile racetracks in the other countries. This problem can be formulated more universally: whether people's requirements met by sports are paramount? Can they be moved to the background relative to the other, more important needs? Whether sports achievements pertain to the most important characteristics of the life quality of a population?

The issue of impact of sport (mainly, sports facilities and competitions) on the environment is also real.

Also in the context of culture of peace, questions as important as in the context of sport arise:

- Whether the process of internationalization of sport fosters realization of fundamental humanistic values connected to culture of peace such as peace, friendship, mutual understanding, mutual respect, tolerance, nonviolence, etc. and if so to what extent?
- Whether sport can induce an appreciation of these cultural values so that they are promoted developed?
- How efficiently can sport implements the mentioned functions?
- Whether competitiveness in its especially sharp forms in the international sport negatively influences those problems, which should be solved by the culture of peace?

To answer all these questions, first of all, it is necessary to give briefly the characteristics of the mentioned social phenomena - sport, culture of peace and sustainable development.

## **2. Sport**

Sport is an extremely complex and multifaceted social phenomenon. There are various kinds and forms of sport: mass sport (“sport for all”), sport of records, amateur sport, sport for bookmakers and corresponding players, “folk” sport, elite sport, school sport, sport for disabled persons (physically challenged people), sport for rehabilitation, etc. Sport has special features in different regions and countries. Some of its qualities change in the course of civilization development. Therefore, it is no wonder that there are various points of view regarding its nature, specificity, and the place in the system of diverse social phenomena. So, there are different definitions of the term “sport”.

In spite of the existence of all above mentioned forms and features of sport, the most essential attributes of sport are generally *competition, rivalry and competitiveness*.

### **2.1. Competition**

#### **2.1.1. Concept of Competition**

The concept of competition comprises a wide approach, according to which a competition is considered as one of the forms *of social estimation based on comparison* of results of a particular personal activity with a certain standard. Such a standard can be represented by the other person, group, the former activity of the same individual or some idealized level of activity.

An analysis of the complex behavior of a person during the process of comparison and assesment of his/her own qualities and abilities with corresponding qualities and abilities of the other people, with himself/herself in the past or with an ideal figure, reveals a broad spectrum *of various objective and subjective aspects* of the given procedure (situation).

First of all, the procedure of comparison of qualities (abilities) can be an element of various activities of a person. So, it can be interweaved into *a cognitive process*, when a person studies himself/herself (or himself/herself and other people), comparing those or other qualities (abilities), revealed during this analysis. Comparing himself/herself with the other people, with himself/herself in the past or with an ideal figure, a model, he/she aspires to understand whether there are any *differences* in this matter and if they exists, to estimate them as positive or negative. In this case, comparison acts as *a subjective procedure of comparison* of the qualities (abilities).

However, the procedure of comparison of qualities (abilities) can be interweaved into the activity of a person connected to his/her resistance (physical, mental, etc.) to contra-forces (from the other person, group of people, nature, etc.) and rival’s activity (at least, one of them). Overcoming these forces, the person achieves a certain goal. Characterizing such behavior of the person or his/her actions in the mentioned situation, specialists use mostly the term “*struggle*” (“*struggle of rivals*”).

The purposes of this struggle can be different. So, for example, a person in struggle can set a goal: to achieve *superiority* over a “rival” (a person, a natural subject or an ideal model, etc.). He/she can also wish *not to surrender* to a “rival” (to be *equal* with him/her) or to concede, but *insignificantly*, to show *his/her own maximum possible result*, to surpass the *former* results, etc. In all these cases, of course, comparison of certain qualities (abilities) and their subjective estimation take place.

In view of the abovementioned distinctions in the procedure of comparison of qualities (abilities), the concept of “*competition (rivalry)*” suggests two special features of the given procedure:

- Comparison of qualities (abilities) is carried out in the *process of struggle* of rivals;
- The purpose set by participants of this process (at least by one of them, for example, in struggle with forces of nature) - to achieve *superiority* over rivals, to be *the first, the best* in comparison with the other people, *to overcome* them.

### 2.1.2. Competition and “Human Nature”

It necessary to clarify a special opinion asserting that a competition, competitiveness are attributes peculiar to “*human nature*” and, consequently, inherent to a human being over all historical period of its existence on the Earth. Sociological and culturological analysis shows that in various social and historical conditions, within the framework of various cultures, competitiveness not only has various forms, but also in general can recede, giving place to *cooperation and collaboration*. For the Greek and the whole western culture, its typical position is expressed, for example, by the following motto: “Be always ahead, be better!”; it was formulated by the father of Achilles for his son. But there are cultures with the other priorities. M. Allison, the former president of the International Committee for the Sociology of Sport, for example points to Navajo culture with its ideas “do not try to outstrip somebody or to think that you are better than the other people”. She illustrates her comments by relay races of Amazonian Indians without winners. Participants run with their top speed, but any way they must come to a finish simultaneously. Navajo Indians at basketball and other games are not focused on competition or aggression. They play until they fall down exhausted, but they never show any aggression, since they do not aspire to overcome the rival. Most importantly, they try to overcome themselves. Other similar facts are also well known. For example, the inhabitants of Andalusia had to abandon football competitions between their villages. The special strong value of such concepts as honor and shame do not allow Andalusians to accept one’s own defeat in a game without subsequent severe revenge out of a stadium. Some nationalities, for example, the Canadian Eskimos, pay special attention to mutual help. Their games are focused primarily on the above mentioned values, and they treat modern traditional American and Canadian sports as a disgusting thing or an amusement (so, for example, they accompany each service, single hit or hit exchange at volleyball with laughter and jokes, rather than with usual exclamations expressing pleasure of success or bitterness of defeat). Margaret Mead, an American anthropologist, studying primitive human cultures of the Pacific Ocean over a period of 40 years including their attitude to competition and cooperative relations, has come to a conclusion that this attitude predominantly depends on social conditions in a particular society. According to her observations, representatives of some archaic

societies (for example, Pueblo Indians) hold sports events without the definition of a winner or without competitive aspects at all and, consequently, such events do not result in any winners. Some researchers analyzing traditional game culture of the Western Sumatra underline that local inhabitants respect in a game not individual success but establishment of various connections and close relations between playing partners. In their games, there are no opponents, but there are “good” and “bad” players, and the main purpose of their game is not the maximum number of points, i.e., not a victory, but successful interaction and mutual understanding between players, “harmony of movement, of game course”.

These are just a few examples of specific game culture, principally focused on *cooperation* rather than *competition* and *rivalry*. Such attitude to a game follows from specific public values and cultural standards promoting humane relations between people, harmony and cooperation instead of success of an individual, and especially success of those who defeat other people.

### **2.1.3. Competition Modifications**

There are different forms and kinds of competitions. They differ from each other by various parameters (features). They include:

- Some rules may be present or absent;
- Competition attitude (humane or inhumane);
- Comparing qualities (physical qualities, dexterity of a person, various intellectual abilities, memory, attention, etc.);
- Components of a competition – participants of a competition (individuals; groups of people; individuals or groups of people, from one side, and natural objects from the other side, for example, at deerstalking: individuals or groups of people from one side and natural phenomena from the other side; for example, in rafting or rock climbing: a person competing with oneself - aspiring to improve on one’s own previous result, etc.);
- Motives of participation in a competition (to defeat somebody (to win), to enjoy a game, to communicate, etc.);
- Competition as an element of daily life (it can be an element of: labor, industrial, economic activity - for example, “socialist competition”, companies, banks concurrence; education – olympiads, competitions for best marks; cognitive and research activity - for example, scientific teams contests; art activity - contests of dancers, musicians, etc.; military activity - battles, etc.);
- Duration of competitions, etc.

Taking into account the presence of various forms of rivalry (competitiveness, competitions) while defining intrinsic and specific characteristics of sport it is important to answer the following questions: what competitions can be treated as sports competitions, what are the basic features distinguishing sports competition from the other kinds of competition?

## **2.2. Sports Competition**

It is easy to answer to the abovementioned questions taking into account the role and value of rivalry of people in common life situations.

### 2.2.1. Importance of Rivalry and Problem of Its Humanization

Rivalry, certainly, plays a certain *positive role* in the life of people. As it was already marked, under certain conditions it allows a person to compare one's own abilities with those others and to understand one's own advantages and disadvantages relative to rivals. Thus competition induces people to activity, to creation, development, perfection of their own abilities.

But rivalry can have also *negative* consequences. In various forms of competition, struggle, conflicts, permanently arising in common life of people, rivalry is quite often accompanied by humiliation of people, harms their health and sometimes even results in a tragedy, at least, for one of the competing sides. The most vivid example of rivalry with such consequences is a war. Moreover, in many real life situations, for example, during labor or cognitive activity of people, it is hard to obtain an objective comparative estimation of human abilities, since different people, as a rule, act in different conditions.

Thus, one of the most important social tasks is to find ways, forms, methods for keeping and maximum use of *positive* sides of rivalry and removing (or softening) its *negative* sides. It means that the main purpose is popularization of *rivalry humanization* (increasing its humanistic value for all people with their relations).

People have tried and keep trying to solve this problem from time to time. For example, to render military battles more "humane" in character, it is prohibited to use certain kinds of arms (chemical, bacteriological weapons, etc.). In other types of rivalry there are written and unwritten rules, norms of fair competition (for example, legal norms of competition between companies, a martial art rule "do not hit supine").

At the same time, there is a general way for solution of the problem under discussion: replacement of *usual* competitive situations from common life of people with *artificially created, simulated (modeling, conditional)* situations with the purpose to create *equal conditions* for rivals, and, thus, to provide all necessary frameworks for unified comparison, *for objective estimation* of qualities and abilities of participants of rivalry, it is also important for saving their health and maintaining their dignity, i.e. to ensure a *humane character* of rivalry.

Social "mechanism" of creation of such artificial situations of rivalry implies the following:

- *Real subjects*, used in common life situations of rivalry and having the certain utilitarian (applied) value, are replaced by the other ("conditional", "toy") things, not having such value and adapted for the specified purposes;
- The *place (space)* of rivalry is modified in an appropriate way;
- Certain *rules* to formulate what it is restricted and what is allowed to rivals (rules-prohibitions);
- Special individuals (*referees, umpires*) ensure observance of the accepted rules and judge the performance of participants of a competition.

All these changes allow the use of rivalry positively for wide social and cultural purposes, for solution complex social-pedagogical problems; i.e. they increase the value of competition for an individual and a whole society.

Within this organizational rivalry framework there appears *a sports* competition.

### **2.2.2. Sports Competition as a Special Form of Competition**

Held in artificially created situations of the specified type, they imply observance of certain rules, including rules-prohibitions, and also presence of the referees (umpires) objectively assessing those or other abilities of rivals.

It means that sports competition is treated in relation with real life competitive situations as their *humane analog*. Its humane nature is in the fact that in such rivalry there is no task to wound, to destroy, or to humiliate one's competitor, all rivals act in the same conditions, according to the same rules, and rivalry itself is intended for objective estimation of one's own abilities and for development of one's own personal qualities. These features differ; for example, a fencing competition from a real battle with swords, sabers, etc., and boxing round from street fight.

The history of creation and development of the most popular sports game - football - shows a gradual formation of rivalry with its specific features in the course of civilization development. In the beginning of its development (about 200 years ago) football was a brutal game. Each player acted according to his/her own rules, and in many cases football was nothing but a form of unlimited aggression. It resulted in increasingly serious injuries. It is no wonder, that in such conditions a society condemned football as barbarous game. In England of that period football teams were frequently compared to the primitive hordes sweeping away all on their way. For aggression mitigation and for control over social conflicts by means of a certain form of discipline in football there appeared a demand for creation of a complex of rules. These rules should meet a number of requirements: 1) to be simple enough; 2) do not deprive a game of interest; 3) to be observed always and completely. Such rules have been introduced in England approximately in 1850. It corresponded to the spirit of that time: the society aspired to limit brutality and violence not only in football, but also in all areas of social life. As a result of rules introduction, football has undergone essential updating. From a dynamic form of activity in which conflicts between individuals and groups of people were resolved by force or threat of damage to the other side, it has been transformed into civilized "pipe" for aggression and inter-group tension channeling. Thus, it was the beginning of well-known modern football. American football differs from European football and it develops its own way. Originally, it also has been inextricably connected to injury of players. And only in 1905 when during American football matches 18 persons were lost and 159 sportspersons were seriously injured, President Roosevelt ordered to take necessary steps for protecting the life and health of sportspersons. Under his pressure some changes have been brought into the game rules. A similar modification of rivalry typical for boxing, appeared in America in 1750. Over a long period of time it was a "bloody" kind of sport, since rivals fought without gloves, and fights lasted forty-five and even more rounds and finished when one of the severely beat rivals gave up or fell down dead. Wide protests of public have forced the congress to pass a law about total prohibition of boxing in all the country.

Only after introduction in 1896 of rules of marquis Kuinsberi boxing has become a somewhat “civilized” kind of sport.

### 2.3. Sport as a Whole

Sport is not only a sports competition; it is a complete social system.

#### 2.3.1. Sports as a social system

Sports competition is not wholly sport, but only its element, though, perhaps, the most important.

Sport can be treated such a way only when on the basis of sports competition functioning and development there appears a complex of social phenomena associated with sport, i.e. under the following conditions:

- Organization of the *corresponding training* for successful participation in sports competitions;
- Creation of special *social institutes* (sports unions, clubs, schools, etc.) and *movements* (sports movement, the Olympic Movement, etc.), promoting sports rivalry, its organization and sportspersons’ training;
- Construction of certain *social relations* during sports competitions, preceding them trainings and in the course of activity of corresponding institutes;
- Foundation of all the mentioned activity on a certain system of *values* and its development on the basis of certain *norms, principles*, etc.

The concept of “*sport*” (“*sports activity*”) characterizes all this complex of social phenomena, developing on the basis of sports competitions and in close connection with them.

Therefore sport acts as a certain *social system*. This system has a relative autonomy, independence of the other social systems of a society, at the same time it interacts with them: undergoes their influence and influence them by a specific way.

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### Biographical Sketch

**Stolyarov Vladislav Ivanovich** is Doctor of Philosophy, Professor. He was born on February 4, 1937 in Moscow. In 1959, he graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy of the Lomonosov Moscow State University. From 1959 to 1972, he worked at the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Science of the USSR. In 1964, he received his Ph.D., and in 1971 he becomes Full Doctor of Philosophy; his thesis concerns the problems of logic and methodology of scientific research.

Since 1972, he works at the Russian State University of Physical Education, Sport, Youth and Tourism (SCOLIPE). Till 2007, he was the head of the Department of Philosophy and Sociology, and currently he is a professor at this department and a Director of SpArtistic Humanistic Center.

From 1986 to 1989, he has been elected for a post of the first vice-president of the Philosophical Society of the USSR. From 1972 to 1991, he was a director of state researches regarding philosophical and sociological problems of physical culture and sport, and also a director of an international group of scientists on the same problems. Since 1976, he is a member of a bureau of the International Committee for Sociology of Sport and a member of an editorial board of an international magazine on sociology of sport. More than 10 years, he is a member of the Olympic Committee of Russia (the OCR), currently he is a member of the “Fair Play” Commission of the OCR.

He is an author of a SpArtistic program of health improvement, recreation and complete development of a person, and also an author of a concept of a new humanistic movement “SpArt”; since 1991, he is a president of Coordinating Board of this movement, which currently develops in 20 regions of the Russian Federation.

His scientific researches are devoted to different problems in the following scientific disciplines: philosophy; logic and methodology of scientific researches; sociology of physical culture and sport (PC&S); philosophy of PC&S; culturology of PC&S; pedagogy of PC&S; aesthetics of sport; ethics of sport; sociology of a human body. He has proved necessity and has started development of new scientific disciplines: a humanistic theory of sport; a non-classical theory of children's sports; Olympic pedagogy; a theory of Olympic culture; a theory of sports culture; humane features of rivalry; a theory of a SpArtistic model of rivalry, etc. Results of scientific researches on these problems are represented in more than 700 publications (more than 100 in foreign languages): treatises, scientific articles, textbooks, manuals, etc.

He took repeatedly the first place in contests for the best research work on problems of the Olympic Movement by the Olympic Committee of Russia; twice he won the first place in a SCOLIPE contest “The best scientist of a year”.

In 2003, for development and implementation of SpArtistic program of spiritual and physical improvement of children and youth, he was awarded with the top prize of the Russian Movement “Fair Play”, and in 2007 he was awarded with the top prize of the European Movement “Fair Play” - The Honorable Plaque and a diploma - for the personal contribution to distribution of ideals and values of “Fair Play”.