

**Sports as a Bifurcating Aspect of Two Nations –
A General View on George Orwell's *The Sporting Spirit***

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Abstract

George Orwell, a pioneer literary figure in the field of English literature. His essay *The Sporting Spirit* deals with the status of sports in the current scenario. Sport is a physical activity which helps to maintain the physique and psyche in a proper manner. The trend of playing games is twisted in the modern and post-modern era which the human community degrades itself. Money manipulates the whole culture in the social set up. The game between two national teams induces bitterness and inculcate nationalism. This paper focuses on the consequences of the sports activities that make friction between two national teams through the views of the author.

Keywords: George Orwell, *The Sporting Spirit*, Sports, Nations, Animosity, Culture, Society

Introduction

Sport is an activity that arouses pleasure for everyone. Many are interested in sports because it acts as a stress reliever. Playing games enhances your physical as well as your mental ability. The purpose of games is to seek pleasure. Sportive thought makes the player into a person of easy going. These are the tendencies which are commonly believed by society. But sport possesses different face which deals with opposite aspects. Considering the competition in a sportive manner provide healthy results which disappear in the present day. The spirit of games is totally collapsed.

Accepting the victory of the other is the main spirit of a sportsman. Disappointments and repeated efforts for success provide the experience which helps to excel in a particular game. This

philosophy can be connected to human life which provides special energy to lead a better life and to create productive surroundings.

Sports – A Deviation to Sound Body and Soul

Sport is an activity connected to the lifestyle of mankind. Culture is another aspect that possess a long path to deal with sports. In India, there are many regional sports activities like Cock-fight, Jallikattu, Gilli-Danda, Kho-Kho, Kite-flying that strengthen the bonds between two local groups. Today, the motto of the game is converted into competitions which arouse animosity in human souls.

The sound body cannot be achieved without a good sporting spirit. They focus to achieve any tournament, not to gain any experience. A person who achieves without any experience cannot withstand his position for a long time. The author explains the degrading action in the sport which leads to a setback of human dignity. The players ruin the opposite team in which it arouses fear towards a sport or the cunning attitude towards other community. This is not a development in the field of sports but, the act of degrading factor of human to worse.

‘Even a leisurely game like cricket, demanding grace rather than strength, can cause much ill-will, as we saw in the controversy over body-line bowling and over the rough tactics of the Australian team that visited England in 1921.’ (para 5, line 1-3)

This is an example by the author, where the cricket players of Australia use rough tactics to corner the opposite team which is unhealthy. This event will register a strong enmity in the minds of the British. They consider the whole Australian people as their enemies where nationalism emerges. This will make a crack between the nations of both British and Australia. Sportsmanship is completely neglected through the violations in those matches.

‘That is, that sport is an unfailing cause of ill-will, and that if such a visit as this had any effect at all on Anglo-Soviet relations, it could only be to make them slightly worse than before.’ (Para 1, 1line3-5)

‘I noted with interest, as an instance of the vicious passions that football provokes, that the sporting correspondent of the Russophile *News Chronicle* took the anti-Russian line and maintained that Arsenal was *not* an all-England team.’ (Para 2, line 10-12)

The bitter experiences of the Dynamo football team weaken the relations between Anglo Saxon. In the Arsenal match, the actions of the spectators change the mindset of the players. They should compete to fulfil the expectations of those spectators. In the Glasgow match, there were controversies which made the game useless. Russians questioned the originality of the England team. They were in a dilemma about whether to play or not. Political colour is painted with their replies. The newspaper *News Chronicle* took the anti- Russian line. These controversies were recorded in history. The visit of Dynamo team exercises a hard break of friendly bonds.

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Reality Vs Thought

‘I am always amazed when I hear people saying that sport creates goodwill between the nations and that if only the common peoples of the world could meet one another at football or cricket, they would have no inclination to meet on the battlefield’. (Para 4, line 1-4)

People feel that sport strengthens national bonding beyond borders. But the author says that international games result in hatred. Sport became too competitive in the present era. Players aim to win and if not, they will be replaced by another. They don't have the chance to experience victory after their fall.

Football & Boxing

‘Football, a game in which everyone gets hurt and every nation has its own style of play which seems unfair to foreigners, is far worse. Worst of all is boxing.’ (Para 5, line 3-5)

International competitions are as similar as rebellious grounds. Sports became a prestigious issue between nations. The activities of both the spectators and the players have an impact on the nations. Any point of victory or action that leads to victory is considered as the national achievements. It is believed to be the virtue of the nation.

The activities of the Australian team in 1921 is inhuman. It caused ill-will and enmity between the two nations such as Australia and England. The game that hurt everyone including the players, as well as the spectators, are Football and Boxing. Boxing is the symbol of animosity. It is a game where racial discrimination exists. Uttermost cruelty is found in Boxing. The activities of the audience in the game are unpleasant. Thought of sport is bad in England. Extreme passion in the developing nations evolves nationalism.

‘In countries like India or Burma, it is necessary at football matches to have strong cordons of police to keep the crowd from invading the field.’ (Para 6, line 3-4)

In countries like India and Burma, uncontrollable problems like riots occur during Cricket and Football matches. He also witnesses the agitations in Spain where violations occur. Breaking the rules to deserve victory is unethical. The spectators insult the opposite team as well as their nation. It leads to jealousy and hatred towards other nations. It is a place in which the rise of nationalism and competitive prestige are the two consequences of present-day sporting spirit. Attracting the larger crowd through games is a new trend in business.

‘In a rustic community, a boy or young man works off a good deal of his surplus energy by walking, swimming, snowballing, climbing trees, riding horses, and by various sports involving cruelty to animals, such as fishing, cock-fighting and ferreting for rats.’ (Para 7, line 16-19)

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Creativity is absent in urban games whereas in rural games there is some creativity. Games arouse brutality in people, which in turn causes hatred between groups. Introduction of football in countries and playing the game with a mixed audience create hatred between nations. This leads to international problems. So, the author finds a solution through sending a second-rate team to Russia, instead of Dynamos, and not to represent the nation as a whole.

Sport in the Present-day Context

Technology is the pioneer factor of the present era where the shift occurs even in games. It changes from playground to the screen whether it might be a mobile or else a television. Physical activities are diminishing, where people either tend to play videogames or to watch the matches on the television. This leads to several physical and mental problems for the human race. The impact of 'Blue Whale' is an example that made the end-user for the suicidal attempts.

Conclusion

The characteristic feature of the competition is animosity which divides nations and encourages sectionalism. In this modern era, the sport is converted as an act of pleasure and advertising platform. Sadism exists through competitive games which should be eradicated. Unity is a strength which should be the motto of every culture. Culture develops through unity and in vice versa.

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