

Definition of Modern Sports

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Tom stared at Ben for a moment, and said, 'What do you call work?'
'Why, isn't that work?'

Tom went back to his whitewashing, and said carelessly, 'Well, maybe it is, and maybe it isn't. All I know is, it suits Tom Sawyer.'

'Oh, come now, you don't mean to say that you like it?'

The brush continued to move. 'Like it? Well, I don't see why I shouldn't. Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?'

That put the thing in a new light. Ben stopped nibbling his apple. Tom swept his brush daintily back and forth—— and stepped back to criticize the effect. Ben watched every move and became more and more interested. Presently he said, 'Say, Tom, let me whitewash a little.'⁽¹⁾

1. Between Work and Play: The Difference Between Physical Education and Sports

Defining something is often done by picking a similar subject and then identifying the differences between them. In sports science, sociologists have long sought to define the word 'sports' in a similar way—— by comparing it to 'physical education'. For some people, the first experience in sports can be physical education at school, but no one would argue that all physical exercises included in physical education courses represent sports. If certain physical activities are performed during official school hours, they are called 'physical education', whereas if the same physical activities are performed during 'extra-

curricular' hours, they are typically called 'sports'. To put it simply, while the society requires growing children to do the former for their own health, the latter ensures individual freedom by which 'you can stop doing it whenever you want'. The meaning of 'you can stop whenever you want' could be best described by an example in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, part of whose lines I quote in the beginning⁽²⁾. Mischievous Tom is ordered by his aunt to paint a fence as a punishment for cutting classes. As he feels that the work is too boring for him, he convinces his friends to paint the fence for him, by pretending as if it is a game to enjoy.

Starting from Ben, his friends who pass in front of his house are all made to paint the fence until they 'feel like stopping'. Although I said 'they are made to', this is only from Tom's viewpoint and his friends are never forced into doing the work for him. On the contrary, they even beg Tom to let them do the work by offering him marbles or toy soldiers, both of which were treasured by children in pioneer days in America. In that sense, it can be argued that his friends played a game, even though they all regretted doing that the next day.

The example in this book underlines the fact that people choose to do something even when they have the freedom to 'stop doing it whenever they want', because even if it is an activity like painting that seems like work, it can nevertheless be turned into play⁽³⁾. This argument leads to the conclusion that the difference between 'physical education' and 'sports' lies in that the latter always has pleasure as the final objective.

2. How do professional sports differ from amateur sports?

The situation is not as simple as concluding that sport is a kind of play. Even Bernard Gillet, who argued that 'sports represent the activities that are opposite to work', added a note that said '*ayant adopté les conditions du jeu le sport devra y ajouter l'idée de lutte*' (sports adopted the conditions of play but the concept of competition must be added to

it)⁽⁴⁾. Carl Diem defines sports as the world where objective-free activities reside and hastily adds that it must accompany efforts to achieve a typified, regulated completion by infusing it with worship and festivity, and by appreciating the nature and spirit of competition⁽⁵⁾. This sounds very much like an excuse.

However, claiming that 'sports equals pleasure' inevitably raises the question, 'Then, what should professional sports be categorised as?'

We cannot deny the fact that professional sports equal work and I am not going to argue against it. However, on the other hand, I am not going to agree to the assertion that amateur sports do not equal work. Just as the question, 'who are amateurs' has been a difficult one to answer since the beginning of the history of modern sports, the 'playful' aspect of sports has always been threatened. In that sense, I would assert that amateurism represents a defence mechanism against these concerns.

In fact, for some period after the end of the World War II, participants in the Olympic Games were required to sign a testimony as follows:

I, the undersigned, declare on my honour, that I am an amateur according to the rules of the International Federation governing my sport, that I have participated in sport solely for pleasure and for the physical, mental, and social benefits that I derive therefrom; that sports to me is nothing more than a recreation without material gain of any kind, direct or indirect, and that I am eligible in all respects for participation in the Olympic Games⁽⁶⁾.

This testimony of amateurship is paradoxical in the sense that although the objective of sports is first limited to the 'sake of pleasure' and then the details of that nature is further confirmed in the following sentence, it is then followed by a sentence that describes the 'physical, psychological and social benefits' that the participants should

enjoy. The fact that the reinstatement of the modern Olympic Games was partly led by the organisation of a congress by Baron de Coubertin, where they questioned the qualifications of amateur athletes, leads me to conclude that amateurism in sports is a subject for which people in any time in history have never been able to come up with a complete answer. In short, modern sports have always been such a presence that its 'occupational' characteristic needs to be concealed by an ideology like amateurism.

My referring to amateurism as an ideology does not necessarily mean that those who pursue it have a fictitious state of mind. People who are involved in any kind of sport, including those who are professional, value those characteristics of sports that do not contribute to their income, and therefore, negatively defining this attitude as 'petit-bourgeois' would not help us gain a complete picture of the fact. The fact that the spirit of amateurism has long been handed down and insisted from the time before the modern Olympics until the era of Avery Brundage, who was nicknamed as 'Mr. Amateurim' and had assumed the post of the 5th president of the International Olympic Committee, implies the significance of the 'pleasurable' nature of sports, which even surpasses the interests of social classes. This tendency can be observed not only among amateur athletes but also among those professional athletes who claim that they 'don't play for the money' while they earn an inordinate sum of money annually. For that, they are praised for having a good 'athletic manner', and the practice is essential for them to be recognised as great players.

To conclude, sports equal the activities in which players (amateur or professional) are put under a constant pressure to achieve certain results, while they (amateur or professional) are supposed to seek pleasure in them at the same time.

3. 'Something Holy' though Less Holy than a Religion

Up until very recently, the pleasurable nature of sports had been put under a constant threat from nationalism, business interests or class strives, but the concept of amateurism has ensured its presence by isolating itself from the 'real world' through ideological determinism. Now that the concept of amateurism is lost, the pleasurable, not occupational, aspect of sports is barely maintained through the repetition of the same, bizarre phrase — 'because that is what makes sports like sports'.

Here, the existence of sports is proved in the same way as the sanctity of God is asserted in Christianity for its irrationality (I believe in it for its irrationality). If people's belief in God is not because of its rationality but its irrationality, which they can never explain, the essence of sports lies in its ambiguity where players who claim that they are 'just having fun' do not necessarily feel comfortable when they are told by others who are not interested in sports that they are 'just having fun'.

In relation to the above, Diem argues that 'all physical activities originated in rituals⁽⁷⁾', overlapping the sports ontology with theodicy to the extreme. This, I believe is not acceptable. Even in the pre-modern age, people should have derived pleasure from sports, although wrestling and fencing are said to have developed as part of military training. In particular, for the discussion on modern sports put into practice, more attention should be given to the academic aspect of sports than to its religious aspect. For example, even in Japanese sumo, to which traditional, religious practices are typically linked, most of the seemingly religious, ritualistic practices have been 'created as traditions', as pointed by Lee Thompson⁽⁸⁾.

Discussing about the sumo ring, which is considered sacred with denied access to women, may serve as the best example. The origin of a

sumo ring goes back to the Edo Period when a ring to separate the wrestlers from the audiences was invented for Promoting Sumo. This Promotion originated for the purpose of collecting door money for the construction and reconstruction of shrines and Buddhist temples. Later, however, it was performed for the entertaining purpose, which led to the establishment of the modern sumo. Promoting Sumo was naturally performed within the precincts of a shrine or temple, and the precincts surrounding the sumo ring were thought to be more sacred than the area within the ring.

The fact that sumo, which is considered to be exceptionally religious among other sports, has a history as described above, leads me to conclude that the pleasurable aspect of sports may have come to partly replace religious belief, which most people in the modern age do not have.

Hereafter, I will continue the discussion by comparing sports to religion instead of physical education, but I nevertheless cannot agree to the argument that 'sports and nothing but sports represent modern religion'. Strictly speaking, I believe that people have experiences in modern sports that are similar to those in religion, because those who claim that they play sports for pleasure must accept the paradoxical nature of the activity itself, as in the practice of confession of faith. To put it simply, sports have come to replace religion as the core of social order, as the latter was gradually dismissed in the modern age.

However, at the same time, it is never possible for sports to fully replace religion (or they would not reach the depth of religion), because faith in something that is genuinely and religiously holy, as Rudolf Otto argues, involves humble acceptance of his/her powerlessness; whereas, the practice of sports requires a very different state of mind⁽⁹⁾. In other words, sports and religion are completely opposite in the sense that, while human potentiality is pursued in sports, admission of human powerlessness is essential in religion.

In fact, people feel fascinated with sports not because of one's powerlessness but because of his/her magnificent competence by which

he/she succeeds in doing something that has been considered impossible. These miraculous achievements are handed down to future generations, but what are handed down here have not been caused by an invisible, great presence as God, but instead by small human bodies, which is the 'miracle' of modern sports.

Anthologist Claude Lévi-Strauss follows this line of argument and says that sports compared to religious ceremonies highlight the contrasting differences between the two⁽¹⁰⁾. To put these differences simply, while religious ceremonies symbolically unify people, sports symbolically divide people. In the practice of religious ceremonies, the disconnection and disparity between the saints and the secular, priests and followers, as well as those between the dead and the living, are overcome, though temporarily, to invigorate the group as a whole. In sports, on the other hand, while equality between players is strictly enforced before the practice, the ultimate objective is placed on dividing players (and supports if any) into winners and losers.

This difference is most likely to be observed when people who have been isolated from modern civilisation get acquainted with sports for the first time. The Gahuku-Gama in New Guinea are reported to have learnt how to play football, but continued to have matches for days until the two teams had an equal number of wins and losses. Lévi-Strauss argues that it is because 'they consider a match as a ritual'. It is the very nature of sports that the difference between groups and individuals is emphasised by its practice, but when they are ritualised as in the case mentioned above, they can also be used to camouflage the differences that exist intrinsically between different members/groups in a community.

Modern sports, nevertheless, involve a certain sense of duty and codes of conduct as in religion. It may sound contradictory, but they are equipped with a control mechanism similar to religious principles.

Examples include the fact that those athletes who had made money in exchange for good results in the era of amateurism were often

suspended from competition or had medals taken away. Furthermore, in pre-war days, people who were engaged in any type of physical labour, including those who did not have any relevance at all to sports, were banned from official competitions by the infamous 'artisan provisions'. The argument for such a policy was that inequality arises when people who use their bodies for living spend most of the training days, though involuntarily, to physically and psychologically compete with those who spend most of their days working in an office. It is a well-known anecdote that the father of Grace Kelly, who was an Hollywood actress and later became Her Serene Highness, The Princess of Monaco, was rejected to participate in the Henley Royal Regatta, because he used to lay bricks for living when he was younger, although it was only after he became rich that he started rowing.

It cannot be denied that this notorious aspect of the concept of amateurism based especially on the 'artisan provisions' was promoted by those people in upper and middle classes who first introduced sports into their societies and then prejudiced against those in lower classes who tried to follow suit. However, it should also be noted that people at that time did not consider such practices suppressive, but to be, with dignity, legitimate. As shown in *Chariots of Fire*, a British film released in the 1980s, one of the main reasons behind the fact that professionalism in sports has been denied for such a long time is based on the belief that it is against the spirit of equality to allow a situation where athletes perform worse or better according to the funds available. From this viewpoint, although maintaining the characteristics of sports as 'pleasure' and not as 'work' has many side effects, it can be concluded that the concept of amateurism has been an efficient mechanism for that purpose.

The two main characters in the film, a Jewish, who are generally believed to have a special aptitude for money-making in Europe and the United States, and a Scottish who wants to be a Christian missionary, symbolise the two fundamentally contradicting attributes of sports.

The point is that both Harold, who tries to improve his performance by paying a coach, and Eric, who overlaps his love of sports with belief in God, can realise great achievements. The process vastly differs — while Harold wallows in the secular world and hires a coach, Eric sticks to his Christian convictions and does not compete in the 100-meter qualification held on a Sunday — but they both can be a winner in the Olympics (Harold in the 100-meter race and Eric in the 400-meter). The two, in the end, are connected by deep friendship based on respect for each other, making them 'heroes' of the British Empire in the early 20th century.

The story shows that those who succeed in 'creating miracles' in sports are not only recognised as great athletes, but are also considered as being equipped with physical sophistication that qualify them to be a role model for the society.

The phrase 'it is not cricket' is used in England, which has led the development of modern sports since the 19th century, to show disapproval of others' behaviour⁽¹¹⁾. Cricket for the people in England is the national sport, just as baseball for Americans, and is very popular in England and former colonies of it (in that sense, it may be more appropriate to call it a 'Commonwealth Sport' that links England with former British Colonies). To be more precise, the phrase 'It is cricket' is used in the world of business when you think that someone is fair-minded enough to continue the relationship, while the phrase 'it is not cricket' is used to describe those people whose selfish, disobedient nature is so strong that it destroys the relationship. Although Japanese readers may not be familiar with cricket, I believe that if you have heard the words like 'sportsmanship' or 'fair play' used in a situation that does not relate to sports, you can understand what I mean here. The point is that, in the modern age, when people's behaviour cannot be regulated by the fear of God, the ideas related to sports often substitute the function.

In extreme cases, sports practised in a social framework sometimes reach the level of monks who try to 'purify themselves' by performing

ascetic practices or putting themselves on a restricted diet, as with the case of Eric in *Chariots of Fire*. I would now like to cite an example of *Kinniku Banzuke*, a sports show that was broadcast on Japanese television during the period between 1995 and 2002. In *SASUKE*, a race for amateur athletes that derived from the show, we could see a collection of 'amateur' athletes who even risked their jobs (or even families in some cases) for almost no reward. The desire for accomplishment and friendship observed among the participants indicates where the spirit of amateurism is destined to go in Japan today, where the discussion on classes does not make sense any more.

These days, we rarely hear the word 'amateurism' and the elite exclusiveness of early sports is something of the past. Nevertheless, many Japanese people who bury themselves in secular interests or pleasures are reminded every summer and spring of the 'way they should be' by watching high school baseball players 'perform' in a fair play game with good sportsmanship at the 'holy Koshien' stadium. These games have even partly replaced the rituals and festivals that used to serve the purpose of reconstructing social order every now and then.

If we go back to the discussion on Lévi-Strauss' comparison, social order created by them are completely opposite. Pre-modern religion tried to 'create commonality or cooperativity that overcomes the disparity caused by the natural conditions such as family background', whereas the rituals of sports have the purpose of dividing people, who are born equal and so have equal rights, into winners and losers.

Despite the difference, modern sports are similar to pre-modern religion because they both function as the 'sacred canopy⁽¹²⁾' that maintains social order. However, the secular version of sacred canopy is more superior in the sense that it provides protection not only for devout Christians but also for other groups of people including Jewish, Muslims and atheists. Although modern sports may fulfill a function similar to festivals in the past, its use is not limited to one community. Instead, they have the possibility to overcome the boundaries between

communities, thus creating links between them. For example, the young Koshien heroes are not confined to Japan, but are given the opportunities to compete with American high school players. They are also given the opportunities to cultivate friendship with young players in other East Asian countries, which can have political implications because the relationship between Japan and the other East Asian countries has grown increasingly strained because of the prime minister's visits to Yasukuni Shrine.

The point here is explained by Allen Guttmann through the uses of 'emulation' that he claims competitive games have⁽¹³⁾. He argues that opponents of religious or political belief can recognise the ability of each other by competing with each other in an equitable, fair game of sports. The popular Japanese cartoon 'Dragon Ball' may serve as the best example, in which old rivals who used to hate and try to kill each other form a united front 'based on the confidence in each other's ability and not on the conscience of each other' to beat a common enemy. It is noteworthy that the special capacity of competitive sports to form order is animated in this cartoon. Similar symptoms can be observed among capable corporate employees who are rivals but are also willing to work together, recognising each other's abilities. The sacred canopy provided by modern sports is formed by the accumulation of 'miracles created' by hard work and the effects of the uses of emulation described above and not by irrational faith.

4. The secular asceticism that laid the foundation for modern sports

To find out about the origin of the code of conduct connected to sports, we need to analyse the origin of the code of life in developed countries from the perspective of industrial capitalism, as indicated in the introduction. The discussion of the notion of 'Spirit of Capitalism' forwarded by Max Weber, a sociologist who is considered to be one of

the founders of the study of sociology, would be useful here.

In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber describes how the ascetic protestant ethic led to the development of the profit-minded spirit of capitalism⁽¹⁴⁾. It is natural to assume that naked human desires for worldly affairs gave rise to capitalism in which increase in capital is a regular target. However, Weber demonstrates, by looking back on the histories of all ages and countries, that pre-capitalism or 'pariah capitalism' driven by secular motives could never reach the level of the large-scale, ever-expanding capitalism in the modern era. To put it simply, as long as industrial activities are pursued for the purpose of fulfilling individual secular desires, capital will cease to expand over time, striking the balance between the desires and the efforts to fulfill these desires. Although unlimited numbers of clans and tribes in the course of history had the unusual ambition to intensify industrial activities, these activities were destined to decline with the fall of the clan/tribe, and therefore, never created trends for the wider society.

On the contrary, examples from every corner of the world in the introductory period of modern capitalism show how apathetic the general public were toward capitalistic expansionism. Also, as presented by Weber, in Silesia, a region that straddles the Polish-Czech border, capitalists, who tried to expand their capital, doubled the salaries of the workers to give workers the incentive to work harder. The workers, on the other hand, responded by cutting their labour by half. Many spouts of capitalism that repeatedly germinated in history have disappeared without being able to 'take themselves off the ground' to modern capitalism, due to the existence of a semi-infinite barrier of the limits of human desires.

Weber argues that the Protestant ethic has brought a major breakthrough in these situations. Protestants, who believe in absolute sovereignty and holiness of God that transcends human intentions unlike Catholics, considered that God does not hear their prayers. Despite the

fact that Protestants of that era sought salvation after death more eagerly than modern people seek to discover themselves, they were never assured of God's salvation. Under the Roman Catholic Church, an individual could be assured of salvation by confessing his/her sins to a priest, by gaining an indulgence or simply by praying in a church. However, under Protestantism, the more devout an individual Protestant is, the more difficult for him/her to explore the signs of salvation in the land of living.

A follower of Fork Catholicism believe that God recognises their good deeds and that, even if they are not to be saved in the land of living, they will be saved after death, to make things even (Similar beliefs are also observed among individuals in many traditional or 'tribal' societies). It is this idea of Fork Catholicism (that things are made even after death) that encouraged workers to respond to the capitalists' efforts to expand their capital by cutting their labour by half as in the example of Silesia.

Protestants, on the other hand, can never influence God's plan of salvation, no matter how good they are, how often they make a donation to a church or how often they pray to God. Whether or not they are saved depends on God's will. Later, ideas reversed and people started to think that instead of believing that they are to be saved for their good deeds, 'it is natural for individuals who are predestined for salvation to have good deeds'. This idea of 'predestination' has the danger of making people hypocritical by engaging themselves in good deeds for the sake of it, thus tempting them into the irreverence of courting God for decriminalisation. Because of this, Protestants are obliged to follow the rules and work hard in every aspect of their lives. This phenomenon is called 'secular ascetism'.

Protestantism thus brought religion into the secular world, making it possible for individual Protestants to show his/her diligence in productive activities as well. Profits made by working from morning to night every single day are all re-invested in industrial activity, leaving

no money for pleasure. It was this Protestant mentality that facilitated modern capitalism to 'take itself off the ground', along with the emergence of a new ethos (or creed that turned into the code of conduct) under which individuals had the freedom to be as diligent as they can, as long as the diligence is not exercised to fulfill their desires. Weber argues that this explains why the spread of capitalism was led especially by, among other European countries, the countries like the Netherlands and England, where Protestants represented a relatively large proportion (He also points out that the earlier establishment of capitalism in some parts of Germany, compared to the other parts, also relates to varying proportions of Protestants between different regions of the country).

A little later, the Puritans led similar processes in America. Benjamin Franklin, whom Weber called one of the pioneers of the Spirit of Capitalism, preaches us as follows:

Remember that *time* is money. He that can earn ten shillings a day by his labour, and goes abroad, or sits idle, one half of that day, though he spends but sixpence during his diversion or idleness, ought not to reckon *that* the only expense; he has really spent, or rather thrown away, five shillings besides. (...) Remember that money is of the prolific, generating nature. Money can beget money, and its offspring can beget more, and so on. (...) He that murders a crown, destroys all that it might have produced, even scores of pounds⁽¹⁵⁾.

With this spirit, Americans worked without wasting a minute to invest compensation to work again in industries, turning the country into the World's biggest capitalist economy, overtaking England.

The United States of America has long been regarded as an experimental field of capitalism. However, because of the characteristics of the country that do not allow traditionalism to be a major force, the

Spirit of Capitalism has often worked too much in America and has brought about extreme outcomes. America was a country where even those immigrants who did not have any money could see immense possibilities expanding throughout the continent; it was, at the same time, a world where the 'strong preyed upon the weak' and the 'weak always got punished'. However, while the strong did prey upon the weak, working against each other was never an objective, as the word 'Shobainin (or wily businessman)' implies negative characteristics of profit-minded people in Japanese. Instead, American capitalism has been nurtured on the ethos of sportsmanship, by which individuals with his/her own ability and capital have the freedom to compete with each other according to the rules of the society (it should be noted that the 'spirit of fair play' is nothing more than an ideal that has motivated the society toward that goal).

The relevance of the notion of 'morality', which Weber argues as one of the leading factors behind modern capitalistic competition, is also discussed by Anthony Giddens, a sociologist in our time, although in a different framework.

Giddens argued, for a correct understanding of the modern age, the three different perspectives of Marx ('order' that arises in capitalistic competition), Durkheim (industrialism based on division of labour) and Weber (the superiority of the rationalism of formalisation as organisational principles)⁽¹⁶⁾. According to Giddens, Durkheim argued against the Weber's pessimistic view on bureaucracy by showing that individual initiatives and motives can be demonstrated even in a rational, organisational environment⁽¹⁷⁾. In other words, he argues that a bureaucratic organisation, which often fails to consider the conditions that are specific to a community or clan, does not necessarily suppress human nature. Instead, such organisations are more likely to retain the basic characteristics of human beings than smaller, more exclusive organisations. In this respect, Giddens is not completely opposed to industrialists' optimism that affluent life is ensured solely by

encouraging individuals' freewill to work hard, provided illegal interventions arising from the personal interests of an individual are kept to a minimum. Nevertheless, Giddens does not support the perpetuation of free competition as the first and ultimate principle like Friedrich Hayek. For Giddens, competitive order arising in capitalism is nothing more than life principles that we humans have to follow, by which we sometimes experience inevitable encounters with catastrophes like wars and terror attacks, never knowing where we are actually heading. His comparison of modern capitalism to juggernaut (derived from Sanskrit *Juggernaut*, which is one of the many names of Krishna from the ancient Vedic scriptures of India and is used to refer to any large, long-distance lorry) efficiently describes the situation of modern people who cannot get off capitalism any more, while they sometimes feel intoxicated by their success of driving it well⁽¹⁸⁾.

Social order in traditional societies used to be built on connections between people by territory or blood. However, with the modernisation of these societies, more rational, organisational structures came to replace these connections and every aspect of people's life has come to be governed by these structures, thus making it more reasonable for people to make plans for their lives based on their confidence in bureaucratic systems. Modern capitalism is destined to develop beyond the borders of local communities that are built on connections among people, as well as the borders of nations that are built on their king's existence as the symbol of the country. Since it is an activity based on pursuit of profits, it has to continue to expand and reproduce itself, or it is destined to go bankrupt. Trades in modern capitalism are therefore required to be global, and should not be bound to any specific place neither by community obligations or kinship, based on people's confidence in universal rationalism and scientific governance. When all these requirements are fulfilled, order in the modern age overlaps with 'competitive order'.

The commitment of modern sports to the notion of fair play

identifies the aspect of competitive order that they represent, which creates order in industrial societies that are based on competitive strategies described above.

5. The Originally 'Global' Nature of Sports Culture

The above discussion on modern capitalism may have sounded too verbose and irrelevant, but the birth of modern sports can never be discussed without reference to the establishment of modern capitalism.

Football is currently the world's most popular sport. The sport began spreading around the world in the 19th century when England, the 'world's factory' at that time, started to establish football clubs in its trading partner countries. That is why the famous club names like 'Genoa' (the oldest football club in Italy) or 'Milan Associazione Calcio' (a recurring champion of both the Italian and world tournaments) still include the English names of the cities and not the Italian names of 'Genova' or 'Miilano'.

Other major sports that originated in England include rugby and golf, and it was the people in England who first played tennis in a more open manner with fixed rules, although the sport originally stemmed from France. The British people also contributed to the development of modern Alpine skiing competitions, by influencing the invention of the discipline of racing and its race courses with gates. The other major sports like basketball and volleyball (as well as baseball that is also popular in some parts of the world) have their origin in America, which later inherited the status as 'world's factory' from England.

Weber's question was: 'Why only in Western countries could spontaneous development of modern capitalism occur?' Here, we could consider the question: 'Why only in England and America could spontaneous development of modern sports occur?'

About this question, critics may argue that it denies the presence of many other sports that originated in countries other than England and

America, but I believe that such argument is as irrelevant as the argument that 'modern capitalism was also achieved by Japan'. There is, in fact, a big difference between something that has 'arose from one's own inherent characteristics' and those that have been 'achieved through imitation or with assistance from foreigners'. As for the validity of discussing the spontaneous nature of developments in modern Japan, the discussion may be valid if it considers the disparities among regions that tried to follow suit through imitation and with assistance from foreigners.

The real paradox of the question 'Why only in England and America could spontaneous development of modern sports occur?' is that both England and America have been/are far more influential to be regarded merely as a locality. To be more concrete, we cannot argue that the birth and development of modern sports in England does not at all relate to the fact that the British Empire had massive influence on the rest of the world around that time. Also, the emergence of America in the 20th century as the country to lead sports culture followed the replacement of Pax Britannica by Pax Americana. To put it simply, although the basic characteristics of modern sports did stem from the inherent characteristics of England and America, they have been somewhat global from the outset, reflecting the status of these two countries as the world power.

In short, the cultural phenomena called sports arose from the combination of local and global phenomena, which I call global phenomena. In addition, the completion of modern capitalism was also a global incident that had its roots in international trades between the centres of industrial production and the supplier countries in the periphery of world capitalism. Norbert Elias, a German Sociologist who worked mainly in England, also argues that the social practice of sports grew out of 'English pleasure' peculiar to the country, which is impossible to be translated in German⁽¹⁹⁾. Given below is a passage from Elias in which he compares sports to industrial activities:

In the past the term 'sport' has often been used indiscriminately with regard to specific types of modern leisure activities and to the leisure activities of societies at an earlier stage of development as well, just as one often referred to modern 'industry' and, at the same time, to the 'industry' of Stone Age peoples. What I have said may be enough to bring out more clearly that sport is something relatively recent and new⁽²⁰⁾.

Then, Why is the word sports still prone to misuse?

The individualistic/global modern sports culture originated among the graduates of British public schools where British elites were produced, and spread to the rest of the world through the organisation of clubs led by these people. Many public schools in the Victorian era, including Eton, Harrow, Shrewsbury, Marlborough and Winchester, had a schoolmaster who embraced the notion of athleticism like Thomas Arnold, who was a famous head of Rugby School and is also known as the author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*.

Although public schools like Winchester and Eton have histories dating back to the Middle Ages, the development of football games in the late 19th century, marked a big turning point for these schools.

When the first public school (though it was called a grammar school back then) of Winchester was founded at the end of the 14th century, it was designed to offer free education to those bright intellectuals born in poor families⁽²¹⁾. Soon after its establishment, children of the middle-class families like landlords or merchants started to enter the school (they were required to pay their boarding fees), the education of children of upper-class families continued to depend on home tutoring into the 19th century. As the public schools had the main objective of educating clergymen and future government officials, sending many of their students to the universities like Oxford or Cambridge, their curricula were typically centred on the study of classical literature in Greek or Latin.

The attainment of political and economic supremacy by the British Empire in the late 18th century, combined with its acquisition of colonies, brought about a change in the situation⁽²²⁾. New government jobs were created every time the Empire acquired a new colony, which offered new careers to those who would have otherwise been regarded as too humble. Furthermore, the resources made available through the acquisition of colonies contributed to the rapid increase in the population who participated in industrial production, and the demand for qualified human resources with knowledge sufficient to lead industrial activities continued to rise.

Alongside these tendencies, the number of public schools also increased dramatically, with their roles and curricula having been slightly changed as well. First, as the knowledge required for governmental activities became more and more sophisticated, the focus of study was changed from classical literature to more practical study of foreign languages and natural science. As class systems started to collapse with the emergence of the new force of industrial capitalists, public schools turned into places where students could learn how to survive in fiercely competitive situations. As a result, it finally became the fashion among upper-class families to send their children to public schools, thus turning these schools into elite educational institutions in reality. As public schools started to be packed with students who were more ambitious and proud than ever, riots by students that even required the suppression by armed forces began to rise.

Schools started to pay attention to the effectiveness of sports in solving the situation, which were played by students only during the extra-curricular hours until then.

Teachers in these schools had extreme difficulty in taming their students, which included the sons of upper-class families, as well as those who had the ambition to rise to the top by taking a job in a colonial government or in a burgeoning industry. Thus, the only effective solution to increasing violence was to encourage students to practice

sports, which arose naturally among students, more diligently. The practice of sports served as a safety valve as the schools had expected, but once the practice was established, it became clear that the practice was also useful in fostering the qualities needed for holding an important position in the military, governments or in business organisations. Sports' effectiveness against violence is attributed to the characteristics of sports culture described above. Holding a job in a colony meant that one had to endure in extremely fierce environments, to live among cultures that he had never experienced in the past, and to develop friendship with people who thought very differently. For those who actually held a position with a colonial government, their experience in sports turned out to be essential in adapting to a new environment. In addition, as described above, the natural compatibility between the 'spirit of capitalism' and the notion of sportsmanship implies that one's experience in sports can go a long way in his/her success as a capitalist. Knowing about the important role that sports play in the psychological development of student, British public schools nurtured students' initiative to participate in sports, without including the activities in their curriculum.

The accumulation of successful experiences in public schools caused the practice to be reproduced both in higher educational institutions (i.e. universities) and lower educational institutions (i.e. preparatory schools and grammar schools). Furthermore, the establishment of many sports clubs by the graduates of public schools inspired people in lower classes of worker categories to follow suit, thus spreading the trend all over the country. The British Empire, at the peak of its power, had colonies in almost every part of the world, as was often said that 'the sun never sets on the British Empire'. It was this increased presence of the British Empire in many parts of the world that led to the worldwide spread of sports, thus turning the practice into universal culture⁽²³⁾.

6. Historical Nature of Sports

The arguments mentioned above in which I tried to demonstrate a connection between sports and modern capitalism or American/British global culture may be susceptible to the criticism that 'such arguments are prone to impose a specific definition on sports'. In the following sentences, I would like to argue against such possible criticism.

Let us consider the example of the Olympic Games. It is true that, the Olympic Games, which continue to be the biggest event in sports, are generally defined as the reinstatement of the Olympic Games in ancient Greece. However, if we look closely into the athletic competitions in ancient Greece, Elias argues that, they are much different from what we recognise as sports.

According to Elias, all the athletic games in ancient Greece, whether they included running, throwing or boxing, were somehow linked to combat drills⁽²⁴⁾. The holding of an athletic meeting as part of the funeral of a hero who died in a war, which seems irrational to us but is nevertheless depicted by Homer in one of his epic poems, could be explained by the fact that athletic competitions equalled combat drills back then. The effectiveness of such meetings in boosting troop's morale that had been deteriorated by the death of a hero can be easily imagined.

The actual athletic games in ancient Greece, especially the matches of wrestling and boxing, were characterised by cruelty incomparable to the modern practice of sports⁽²⁵⁾. Many people died while they were wrestling or boxing and gloves represented a weapon to deliver deadly damage to the opponent, unlike in modern boxing where gloves are mainly used to protect the boxers from damage.

Although this was not pointed out by Elias, the ancient Olympic Games, which also represented sacred rituals to praise the God Zeus, and modern Olympic Games stemmed from a very different set of

values. Numerous miracles were achieved as the results of competitions were linked to the glory of God, whereas the same miracles are attributed to individual athletes in modern Olympics. This difference is associated with the different ways of thinking that ancient people focused on the achievements of a community as a whole, while modern people focus more on individual achievements.

Then, those who are familiar with the history of gymnastics may argue that the development of the sport had little to do with British/American culture, thus questioning the validity of my argument on what constitute sports.

It is generally believed that the sport also traces its origins to ancient Greece warriors receiving 'gymnastic' training. However, I believe that modern gymnastics stemmed from the practice of *Turnen* in Germany. The word *Turnen* does not only refer to physical exercises for building strong bodies, but also to social activities in which people were trained for fire-fighting or military service⁽²⁶⁾. The upsurge of German nationalism that arose from the opposition to the control of Napoleon is believed to have given rise to Turnen (or Turnverein). However, because Germany at that time was not still unified as a modern nation, people in some parts of the country did not favourably receive the movement, while it was banned in other parts as the movement of democratisation against the rule of the king. Considering that Turnen was especially popular among the public, the ruling class had every reason to be concerned.

In the 19th century, besides Turnen in Germany, people in its surrounding counties like Denmark or Sweden engaged in similar exercises (or social/nationalist activities). The *Sokol* movement in the early 20th century in the Czech Republics of today had the ethos and organisation similar to those of Turnen. All these movements arose from public enthusiasm to rally grass-root support for national solidarity, with the rise of German nationalism⁽²⁷⁾.

These gymnastic (and social) movements were free-for-all club

organisations whose democratic nature resembled that of sports culture in England. However, as the Swedish gymnastics introduced physical education to warriors into Japan during the Meiji era, these movements had always been stuck in the cause of producing national guards, thus never succeeding in bringing pleasure to the people unlike modern sports. Furthermore, the strong connection of these movements to the noble cause of increasing national solidarity had caused people to feel extremely uncomfortable about respecting the competitive principles of modern sports. In fact, it was the establishment of the modern Olympic Games led by the people in France who tried to translate British sports culture into something more universal and not German Turnen, which played a larger role in the development of the current scoring methods of modern competitive gymnastics. However, even the establishment of the modern Olympic Games can be attributed to the people in England, considering that Baron de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympics, first took notice of sports when he found that the secret of English supremacy lied in the practice of sports.

However, the conflict in Germany between the Turnverein and those who supported the principles of modern sports came to a turning point in the latter half of the 19th century, when the establishment of British global hegemony gradually tipped the balance in favour of the latter. This tendency intensified after Germany's defeats in the two world wars, and the Turnen was gradually integrated into modern sports.

Although it is true that gymnastics did not originate from British/American culture and that the sport has been developed independently, in the sense that it was finally turned into competitive performance, it could be argued that even gymnastics could not avoid being taken over by British sports culture. All the grass-root movements that attempted to develop nationalism through gymnastics had both their driving force and limits in the fact that they always resisted against a more powerful force. Campaigns led by nation-minded

gymnastic organisations were highly exclusive in nature and could never have much influence beyond national borders, while modern sports can attract support with competitive strategies regardless of social boundaries. Then, what can be more popular in the long run is apparent to everyone.

The values of sports culture that aspire to competitive order became a focus of criticism in Japan, when modern sports culture was first introduced into the country. In 1911, immediately prior to the first National Championship Tournament of High School Baseball at Koshien Stadium, a series titled 'baseball and its virus' was started in the Asahi Shimbun. In the first installment of the series, the tricky nature of baseball characterised by the practice of base stealing was criticised as not being fair, and Inazo Nitobe, then the headmaster of the First Higher School (the preparatory division of the Imperial University), called the sport 'pickpockets' pastime'⁽²⁸⁾.

These criticisms do overlap with the German Turnverein's objections against sports. However, in Japan, the object of criticism was mostly limited to the importer (Japan), as in the criticism by Nitobe who said, 'Setting aside the original American baseball, the baseball imported to and transformed in Japan is.....'. However, as Japan grew into a capitalist nation following the Taisho Democracy, people stopped criticising the practise. The Asahi Newspaper Publishing Company, which once carried a series to criticise the sport, gradually increased its circulation by reporting about high school baseball at Koshien, while radio stations increased the number of their listeners by broadcasting college baseball.

The examples described above demonstrated that there is a crucial difference between modern sports culture and the athletic cultures or combat drills in ancient and medieval times, and that modern sports are highly compatible with the pleasurable, secular and competitive nature of modern capitalism. As such, when modern sports were first introduced into countries like Germany and Japan, which fell behind

England and America in the establishment of modern capitalism, the two contradicting sentiments of resentment and adoration typically arose among the people.

7. The Spirit of Capitalism in Sports

I believe that the above discussion demonstrated the relationship between sports and the spirit of capitalism. To facilitate the distinction between sports and pleasure, I list the seven requirements of sports below, according to the Guttmann's suggestion⁽²⁹⁾:

- 1) Secularism
- 2) equality of opportunity to compete and in the conditions of competition
- 3) specialization of roles
- 4) rationalization
- 5) bureaucratic organisation
- 6) quantification
- 7) the quest for records

All these can be compared to the secular asceticism described above. In the following section, I explain about each requirement.

First, about the secular nature of sports, Guttmann followed the Diem's argument that pre-modern sports (or practices that resembled sports) that had originally been closely associated with religious rituals gradually became secularised with the modernisation of societies. However, I cannot accept their interpretation here because many counterexamples have been reported by research conducted in the so-called 'uncivilised societies'. Instead, I would like to argue that the fundamentals of sports praise individuals' ability to create miracles did not allow them to be associated with religion any longer.

Second, the importance of 'equality of opportunity to compete and in

the conditions of competition,' is described well by Lévi-Strauss' comparison of religious rituals to sports. Similarly, it can be overlapped with the worldwide success of modern capitalism that was achieved through its adherence to the concept of 'fair competition', unlike pariah capitalism where profit was pursued by any means — fair or unfair.

To be more concrete, although tennis originated as a group activity among the upper classes of society, the development of British club organisation offered equal opportunities to people in the lower classes. The word 'serve', which refers to a shot to start a point in tennis, originated in the serving of the first shot by the servants of aristocratic players⁽³⁰⁾. However, after the modernisation of society, players were all treated equal in the court, with the people in both the higher and lower classes playing under equal conditions. Now, even the nobility have to serve themselves to start a game and are not allowed to have more people than their opponent's team. The terms like 'bullet server' or 'cannon serve' have their roots in these facts.

'Specialization of roles' refer to the division of roles that players take while playing, let's say, modern football. Primitive football was a game played in an open field among members of neighbouring communities in which individual players followed the ball without any rules. Modern football, on the other hand, is played in a pitch whose dimensions are specified, and the role of goalkeepers who may use their hands, as well as that of field players who must not use their hands, is clearly defined. As such, football was transformed from activities seeking pleasure to a game by which the winner and loser must be determined under equal conditions.

Rationalization of modern sports can be observed in the development of stroke play in golf, which allowed many people to play in one game, unlike match play in which only two players can play.

In addition, the establishment of clear rules, which can then be documented, is also a sign that the sport is being rationalised, which will in turn allow it to be played in any place according to the same field

requirements. The time periods of games/matches were specified for more rationality as well.

'Bureaucratic organisation' is essential in establishing official rules, based on which people in every walk of life can participate in competitive sports freely and equally.

'Quantification' allows competitions between players who are divided from each other either by time or space. The results of competitions are quantified so players can compete with those who live in very distant locations or even with dead champions.

Finally, 'the quest for records' refers to where quantification is destined. As is often the case in today's track/field athletics and swimming competitions, with the technology developed to the full extent, people started to make a big fuss over world records that have been broken with the difference of milliseconds, that are impossible for the human eye to recognise. The tendency is also observed among those pro-baseball fans who try to show off their knowledge by explaining that this marks the 55th or 56th leadoff homer in the first game of a new series for the team or by fussing over who holds the record for consecutive pitching appearances, which contributes neither to the number of wins nor to the number of saves.

Guttmann argues that physical exercises that fulfill/almost fulfill the requirements described above can be defined as sports. I adhere fundamentally to the Guttmann's definition of sports, though my definition is slightly different from his in the points described above.

Here, if we go back to the dialectical discussion about the two opposing aspects of sports, activities performed merely for the sake of pleasure can be turned into a sport (though only in a superficial way) by incorporating the modern criteria of work into the activity. Guttmann therefore questions us, 'How can we humans who are embedded into organisations remain in the free world', referring to the distinction between the English words 'play' and 'game'. In other words, he argues that the key to understanding the notion of sports lies in the question,

Why is it still possible for us to enjoy sports that have become as rationalised as they can now be defined by seven modern capitalistic characteristics?

This question relates to the last part of the above discussion on secular asceticism. There, I pointed that Protestant ethic was transformed into the spirit of capitalism when people stopped performing an activity to achieve pleasure in the future or to be assured of salvation after death, but instead started to derive pleasure from the practice of an activity itself, which for them represented working and accumulation of wealth. Similarly, trying to ensure pleasure in sports will not bring about any changes, as pleasure itself is often the objective of sports. As illustrated by the Declaration of Amateurism, which the participants in the Olympic Games were required to sign in the past, no matter how hard a player trains himself/herself, no matter how much time and money he/she gives up and no matter how tangible the results (victory or defeat; records) are, he/she does not think that the results themselves have intrinsic values. The results achieved in sports, no matter how outstanding they are, cannot be put into practical use in the long run. Sports are turned into enjoyable play only when players start to focus on the process through which the results are achieved, instead of the results themselves, and learn to obtain pleasure from reliving his/her own experiences.

However, at the same time, activities that do not seek any tangible results like records, victories and defeats (or the conquest of uncontrollable natural environments, in some competitions) cannot be described as sports. These activities are instead referred to as pleasure.

'Negative dialectics⁽³¹⁾' in sports, unlike the common dialectical method, is an attempt to accept the non-identity of both the occupational and pleasurable aspects of sports by recognising the limitations of the both. This fundamentally unexplainable nature of sports has led everyone who discusses sports to assert that sports equal pleasure and add an explanatory note on the conditions for such a case.

As Michael Novak, a clergyman (and a sports sociologist), argues that, it is true that, through sports, both players and audiences can experience exhilaration similar to religious experiences. However, this exhilaration never leads sports to pursue religious transcendency. Instead, because sports have never reached the level of religion, they have been able to retain compatibility with modern society that has been secularised to the full extent. In fact, a survey on soccer (football) fans conducted by Janet Lever in Brazil shows that 'the more religious a fan is, the more he/she can become an enthusiastic fan⁽³³⁾'. The same survey revealed the fact that fans of the low-income class spent about 10 percent of their income to watch football matches while fans of the higher-income classes aspired to assume the post of chairman of a football team. The survey also reported that quite a few fans have had a heart attack after their team had been defeated in an important match.

Now, it has become clear that, to think about what sports is, it is necessary to look not only at the occupational and pleasurable aspects of sports, but also at the modern concept of holiness, which is distinct from classical religious ideas. If the social theory of sports is to be defined by this triadic relation, we should now look at the triadic theory of holiness, secularism and pleasure, which was developed by Shun Inoue.

8. Cataclysmic Changes in 'Holiness, Secularism and Pleasure' in the Modern Age

The triadic theory of 'holiness, secularism and pleasure' was developed by Shun Inoue based on the argument of Roger Caillois as a perspective to understand social phenomena. Everyone who has introductory knowledge about cultural sociology should know that the application of the triadic theory is proposed by Inoue in his *Asobino Shakaigaku (Sociological Insight on Play)*. However, despite its logical consistence, its broad perspective as a social theory has often led its

readers to interpret wrongly. In the argument against the common/possible misinterpretations, I would like to point out that Inoue does not try to glorify the domination of pleasure by dualistically comparing it to work. Rather, he tries to understand the reality from the three perspectives of holiness, secularism and pleasure. Second, it is not static illustration of facts but a historical theory that can complement Weber's theory of modernisation.

The first common misunderstanding probably arose from the misfortune that the triadic theory was unveiled by Inoue during the 1970s, when the superiority of the pleasurable characteristics was widely believed. Although the situation may not have been as extreme as that of the modern age or the 21st century, the popularisation of leisure as a new social phenomenon had an extremely high profile during the decade, as 'children who did not have firsthand knowledge of war' reached adolescence and started to enjoy the prosperity of rapid economic growth. At the same time, the fact that older generations who remembered the trauma of being defeated in war had extreme difficulty in accepting the 'loss of the worthiness of death' lowered the level of holiness in the society. It is regrettable that, because of that historical backdrop, the long-awaited triadic theory was buried in the outdated question of what is really valuable, work or pleasure. In fact, Inoue himself had been trying to warn people of such misconceptions since long before the publication of *Asobino Shakaigaku (Sociological Insight on Play)*, though through a relatively minor medium of a university bulletin. In this, he argues as follows against the mainstream argument in the 1970s that was dominated by the leisure theory, by having a panoramic view of a new outlook that had originated in the theories on play put forward by historians like Huizinga or Caillois:

However, the traditional 'leisure theory' fundamentally focused on the function of work (i.e. the function of work as the axis of leisure), and its discussions tended to be limited exclusively to the

recreational function of leisure, which is the function of leisure to reproduce energy in workers. On the contrary, theories on play attempt to establish a division between the ordinaries and the extraordinary and determine the implications of extraordinary activities called play for the ordinary of social life, in other words, the functions that play fulfills in society and in individuals⁽³⁵⁾.

In the same paper, Inoue argues that any theory on play originated as a triadic theory, referring to Schiller's theory on play that is influenced by the thoughts of Huizinga and Caillois. According to Schiller, besides the desires of living creatures and natural reason, humans have impulse for play, which mediates between desires and reason and strikes the balance between the two. For humans to be human, one must have the ability to function this impulse, without placing a disproportionate emphasis on either desires or reason. Schiller does not recognise any activity, which is not measurable by a quantitative concept like time, as play, be it described as work or as leisure. As shown in the excerpt from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in the beginning, play is a qualitative concept, which does not equal to any single aspect of daily life like leisure or leisure activities. It is instead a dominant concept under which objects of lower levels are subsumed.

However, it is wrong to perceive Schiller's theory as equalling the anchoretic ideas of the East that 'by cutting the connection with daily life, one can attain a state of mind with which he/she can enjoy play to the full extent'. The idea of attainment sought by Japanese haiku poets equals the pursuit of freedom under Western, modern theories of play, thus making it subject to criticism (though this argument is nothing more than words on paper that do not consider different historical backdrops, it does not make any sense to talk about the life of Basho Matsuo or that of Issa Kobayashi within the framework of these theories. Conversely, sports that are extremely modern in nature are best described by those theories on play after Schiller). Impulse for play

described by Schiller represents the realisation of extraordinary beauty within daily life, which is achieved without abandoning both desires and reason. Remaining in the secular world is a prerequisite here⁽³⁶⁾.

In the example of sports, amateur baseball or football played to make up for the lack of exercise or for workers' refreshment cannot be described as sports, to be precise. However, if these games/matches can recreate the way Ichiro returned a ball in Major League Baseball the day before or the way the midfielders in Jubiro Iwata in its prime led the team to score many goals, beauty can be created even in the field on a dry riverbed. Beauty can also be created by those amateur players who do not necessarily try to imitate famous players but deliver such performance that he/she has dreamt of for a long time. Sports at the amateur level offer pleasure to players by providing them with 'daily miracles' like the ones described above. At the professional level, where individual players constantly feel the pressure of having to win in each game whose results cannot only affect his income but also his life, it is the brief silence and the feeling of sensation among audiences that follow a great performance that bring the spirit of play into the field of professionalism.

Schiller's theory on play was a triadic theory based on a triadic relation of rationality, sensibility and impulse for beauty, unlike my theory, which is based on the relationships between holiness, secularism and pleasure. I do not discuss the difference between these in this paper, but it should be noted that Schiller's theory on play has an organisation (i.e. triadic organisation) similar to that of Caillois, though with some differences.

The main difference between Schiller and Caillois probably derives from different historical backdrops and not from different ideas. Unlike in the era of Schiller when the word 'modern' meant nothing more than an idea to lead the future, in the world after the establishment of modern capitalism which allowed the spread of utilitarian

calculus among people and the unlimited expansion of people's desires, the opposition between sensibility and rationality gradually ceased to exist. In other words, the desires of modern people who were now, according to rational calculations, required to pursue their obligations to the maximum possible extent, did not equal to natural human desires any more in the sense that the former are intrinsically rational in nature. As a result, the conflict between the two reach the unconscious level, making it invisible.

The classical conflict between rationality and sensibility (which relates to the thought of Kant), which Schiller focused on, was replaced by a new ethic of secular asceticism, by which social conditions that enable an unlimited pursuit of desires were ensured. That has in turn caused the conflict between social ethics and personal interest to arise, instead of the conflict between rationality and sensibility. The fact that theories on play after Caillois, while they all adhere to the discussion on a three-dimensional relationship, came to focus on components different from those of Schiller's can be attributed to the efforts of later historians to adapt to the changes that have occurred over time.

In the beginning of this chapter, regarding the second common misconception of the triadic theory of holiness, secularism and pleasure put forward by Shun Inoue, I have pointed out that it overlooks the theory's aspect as a historical theory. The comparison of the thought of Schiller to that of Caillois here has relevance in the sense that it is an attempt to highlight that aspect of the theory. Apart from that, the development of individualism in the notion of holiness is described by Inoue in a paper titled *Perspective toshitenno Asobi (Play as a Perspective)*. The so-called dimensional expansion of play in the modern age occurred, as Inoue argues, as a result of expanded opportunities of freedom, which in turn arose from decrease in the power of religion to limit the activities of individuals due to the development of individualism in the notion of holiness. The extension of individualism in the notion of holiness, along with the expansion of the realm of play,

has great relevance to the development of Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism described above. Under the Protestant Church, individual Protestants are encouraged to develop a church in his/her own mind, instead of relying on the church, which is the organisation of human beings that are prone to make mistakes, to make his/her decisions, thus promoting the development of individualism in religion by its principles. In addition, with the globalisation of capitalism, the principles of Protestantism spread as a universal spirit, allowing modern people to acquire freedom, which is not restricted by anything but their own conscience.

Similarly, in sports, miracles expected of the practice are not created by external factors but, as I have already pointed out, by individual athletes. That, I believe, is also an example of individualism in holiness. This development of individualism in every aspect of social life is closely related to the spread of the modern concept of 'personality adoration' as pointed out by Emile Durkheim. God, which not only Protestants but also modern people in general look up to, exists only in individuals' mind. Similar phenomena are observed among audiences of sports. Although they, as enthusiastic fans, become hoarse from singing a cheering song together with fellow supporters with their arms around each other, once the game/match is over, each has his/her own life which is more important than the team.

With the establishment of the network of highly-developed social division of work, people have lost the ability to look at the 'whole picture', which expands beyond the confines of communities, and do not even feel the need to look at the whole picture any longer. When that is the case, people start to perceive sports as what Edgar Morin calls a 'terrestrial myth'. Clearly-stated rules, along with a social system (which is exactly what sports represent) protected by organisations through which these rules are supported, have provided people with a sense of security, which have in turn allowed people to enjoy individual myths of sports that are not necessarily shared with others.

9. Sports and Freedom

In the previous chapters, I have discussed how individual myths have been nurtured by sports against a backdrop of the establishment of the modern age. However, it should be noted that the term 'individual mythology' is very contradictory in nature. It is a sound argument that individual myths are equal to imagination, but this argument does not apply to sports.

In the past, in communities where the profile of the society was kept to a level that was imaginable for individuals and people were easily forced to disperse in the face of natural and foreign threats, myths in fact were commonly possessed by all. Any social order could not be created if people could not believe in the worldview centred around God or in those myths in which public power was personalised. If that was the case, social life could not have been maintained in the first place.

However, with the establishment of modern capitalism, those concerns disappeared. At that time, it was difficult just to suspect the presence of social order, unless you were an obsessed philosopher or a sociologist. In reality, social unrest has of course never ceased to exist and social order has often been disrupted by each and every incident. However, in the course of day-to-day activities, people rarely feel the lack of social order but instead feel more frustrated with the overpresence of society, as typified by the feelings of 'going nowhere' or 'helplessness'. People try hard not to feel the necessity of recalling a myth for a society whose demonstration of its presence makes people feel oppressed. In that very fact, we see the possibility of individualism arising in myths.

Confined to a situation that is characterised by monotonous rationality and can even be compared to a 'steel cage', people have come to expect the power of myths to achieve the diversification of individualism. As a result, apart from the intrinsically contradictory nature of the

term, I argue that individual mythology has become necessary to people and the social practice of sports has been established as a mechanism to produce such myths. By thinking in this way, all the phenomena accompanying such mechanism of sports could be defined more easily.

It is not surprising that, when the symbiotic relationship between sports and modern capitalism is emphasised, there are people who throw a harsh criticism against the idea. No matter how many virtues of sports people like Coubertin, Diem or the current chairman of IOC extoll, the criticism that sports is nothing more than recreation offered by those who take control of modern society to the general public in compensation for oppression has never disappeared. Even Huizinga, who often appears in textbooks on sports science, criticises sports for being too serious in nature. According to him, the bureaucratic organisation of sports, combined with the separation of professional athletes and amateurs, caused sports to lose their social and holy characteristics, thus undermining their quality as play⁽³⁷⁾.

In fact, certain aspects of sports make themselves vulnerable to the criticism that supports culture has imposed the values of the ruling class (i.e. capitalists) on the general public.

According to Richard Gruneau⁽³⁸⁾ and John Hargreaves⁽³⁹⁾, even for people in the lower classes of society, the possibility to achieve their own independent values is assured through the practice of sports. In other words, the lower classes of society accept the values of the upper classes through such negotiation. Sports make it possible for such a negotiation to take place and can therefore serve as a major ideology. As Pierre Bourdieu⁽⁴⁰⁾ points out, the ruling class of society is not actually a monolithic existence. Dominant-subservient relationships in society can be described broadly as hierarchical relationships between upper and lower or those between upper, middle and lower. However, in a more precise sense, they also extend transversally, reflecting the diversity of capitals (capital; cultural capital and social capital, i.e. cash and

land holdings, language ability and other qualifications and nationality and ethnicity). As such, if we assume the diversity of dominant values, it can be argued that freedom enjoyed by the subordinate class in sports is nothing more than the freedom to choose among the range of things that are pre-specified by the ruling class.

However, it is nevertheless wrong to conclude that sports are bad. What we are facing here is a dilemma encountered not only in sports culture but also in every other type of culture. As Eagleton argues, if every culture is related to the dominant ideology, every social development is accompanied by oppressive factors. According to him, an ideology in the modern age is not a partial existence from which people can consciously distance themselves⁽⁴¹⁾. It is exactly an culture itself and we cannot even have the willingness to live without it. Society is a chain to bind people, while it is also a land of opportunities.

In this paper, while I recognise the fact that every type of culture, including sports, possesses an oppressive ideology, I do not necessarily argue that it is, in principle, impossible for humans to live free from confinement. In fact, I have emphasised the pleasurable nature of culture to resist such pessimism. As play is correctly described by Huizinga as the 'source of creativity', freedom of human beings also derives from there.

I should also add that this argument should not be reduced to the simple assertion that play is likely to dissociate oneself from reality. It is this alienation from reality that creates human freedom'. As I have repeatedly pointed out in this chapter, believing that play is limited to superterrestrial attainment is an overly Japanese (or East Asian) approach to the issue, because, according to Western theories on play after Schiller, play derives from its conflict with reality. If play were understood merely as alienation from reality or disengagement from work, it would not be doing anything but setting people free. If sports are played by people as a desperate means of escape from social confinement, they should probably be criticised as alienating people from

society.

However, I believe that sports culture discussed in this chapter should mean much more than that. Although it actually represents individual mythology, it is not subjective imagination either. Behind the individual mythology called sports, there exist organisations and rules to support them, and above all, interests of people living in the real world. Accomplishments in sports are not imagination economically, socially, culturally and in any other sense.

While they are realistic in nature, sports do not necessarily try to retain the aspect of pleasure. In the chapter titled *The Spirit of Capitalism in Sports*, I pointed out that trying to ensure pleasure in sports would not bring about any changes, as pleasure itself is often the objective of sports. In the pursuit of the same discussion, I would now like to point out that ensuring freedom in sports equals to enhancing their sociality through the establishment of formal and rational organisational principles.

Freedom is often related to liberation of individuals from confinement. However, according to Adorno, independence cut completely off from others is nothing more than pathologic imagination, which influences people in the modern age⁽⁴²⁾.

The fact that individuals have come to be recognised as a separate existence independent from social relationships actually serves as the basic condition essential for the discussion on ideal freedom. However, if freedom is gained through denying the connection with others or by imposing individual preference, there is nothing ideal left in there. Human freedom cannot exist with the lack of connection with others or sociality⁽⁴³⁾. They should rather be referred to as selfishness or self-applause.

However, the situation where individuals are buried in relationships and feel trapped cannot be described as freedom either. Consequently, freedom may refer to the moment when individuals see the light in their struggle against the hopeless current situation. We are always

stuck between the tiger at the front gate (the possibility of being oppressed) and the wolf at the back gate (the possibility of oppressing others), and there is no easy prescription for gaining freedom.

The practise of sports has sometimes contributed to the solution for difficulties that we humans face, by opening a new approach to change the situation. The feeling of liberation that people who love sports (including me) believe to have derived from the practise of sports could be described as real, as long as modern sports adhere to the idea of negative dialectics by which none of holiness, secularism or pleasure has dominance over the others.

Notes

- (1) Mark Twain, (retold by M. Coghill), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Macmillan, 1971, pp.14-15.
- (2) This discussion over freedom should be considered in light of the distinction by Isaiah Barlin between 'passive freedom' and 'positive freedom'.
- (3) The argument is based on Masahiro Inagaki's review of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in *Sports wo Yomu II—Read about Sports II*, Sanseido, 1994.
- (4) Bernard Gillet, *Histoire du Sport*, Presses Universitaires de France, 1970 (Que sais-je?:337), p.11.
- (5) Carl Diem, *Wesen und Lehre des Sports und der Leibeser Ziehung*, Weidmann, 1964, pp.21-22.
- (6) Eugene A. Glader, *Amateurism and Athletics*, Leisure Press, 1978, p.149.
- (7) This argument is based on the discussion by Allen Guttmann in *From ritual to record: the nature of modern sports*, Columbia University Press, 1978, p.16.
- (8) Lee Thompson, 'Sumo wrestling as seen through the modernizing process of sport', cited in Yoshiaki Kameyama, *Sports no Shakaigaku—Sports Sociology*, 1990, pp.71-92.
- (9) Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of The Holy*, Oxford University Press, 1957, p.17.
- (10) Claude Lévi-Strauss, *La pensée sauvage*, Plon, 1962, p.44.
- (11) Makoto Yamada, 'Sportsmanship no Kuni Igrisu—England: A Country of Sportsmanship', in *Sports toiu Bunka—The Culture Called Sports*,

Suntory Fueki Ryuko Kenkyusho, 1992, pp.44-45.

- (12) The word is of course derived from Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: elements of a sociological theory of religion*, Doubleday, 1969.
- (13) Allen Guttman, *Games and Empires: modern sports and cultural imperialism*, Columbia University Press, 1994.
- (14) Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, should be referred to throughout the discussion.
- (15) Benjamin Franklin, 'Advice to a young tradesman', in *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin & Selections from His Other Writings*, Modern Library, 1950, pp.232-233.
- (16) Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Polity Press, 1990, pp.11-13.
- (17) *ibid.*, p.138.
- (18) *ibid.*, p.139.
- (19) The fact that a social phenomenon called 'sport' has continued to be influenced by cultural characteristics originated in the Victorian Era of the British Empire is also described by Norbert Elias, 'An essay on sport and violence' in N. Elias and E. Dunning, *Quest for Excitement*, Basil Blackwell, 1986, pp.150-174.
- (20) N. Elias and E. Dunning, *Quest for Excitement*, pp.151-152.
- (21) For more information on the history of public schools, refer to Motomichi Imura, *Eikoku Public School Monogatari—Stories on British Public Schools*, Maruzen, 1993, or to Geoffrey Walford, *Life in public schools*, Methuen, 1986.
- (22) The discussion on the 'passion for games' that spread all over the British Empire through the establishment of public schools derives from Kenji Muraoka, 'Athleticism and Gentlemen: team sports in public schools in the 19th century', in Kenji Muraoka et al, *Gentlemen: Sono Shuhento Igrisu Kindai—Gentlemen: the surroundings and modern England*, 1987, pp.228-261.
- (23) In England, which became a global empire in the late 19th century, sports were seen as an important 'cultural bond' that connected Anglo-Saxons who were scattered around the world. Other ethnic groups in colonies were also expected to adhere to the cultural bond. The tradition is still alive in the 'Commonwealth Games', which are also referred to as the 'Olympic Games of the British Commonwealth'. Refer to Masayuki Ishii, 'Shokuminchi

Shugi to Sports Bunka no Kakudai—Colonialism and the Expansion of Sports Culture' in T. Usami et al, *Sports Jinrui Gaku—Sports Anthropology*, 2004, pp.64-66, or to Masayuki Ishii, 'Field no Orientalism—Orientalism in fields' in I. Ariga et al, *Sports*, 2002, pp.279-318.

- (24) Norbert Elias, 'Sport et violence', *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, No.6, 1976, pp.8-9.
- (25) Tony Perrottet, *The Naked Olympics*, Random House, 2004.
- (26) Ikutoshi Ariga, *The Turnverein in Southwest Germany*, in I. Ariga et al, *Sports*, 2002, pp.145-197.
- (27) Hiroshi Fukuda, 'Sokol to Kokumin Keisei—The Sokol movement and the formation of the nation: the gymnastic movement in Czechoslovakia', in I. Ariga et al, *Sports*, 2002, pp.67-96.
- (28) Katsuichi Honda, *Baseball and Its Virus*, 1991, p.177.
- (29) See A. Guttmann, *From ritual to record*, 1978, p.16.

My attempt to overlap the basic characteristics of sports with competitive order of modern capitalism may be misleading, given the changes in sports culture that occurred during the 1970s. I would like to confirm here that I use the word sport in this discussion in its original meaning. With the establishment of 'new sports' like jogging or fitness, which do not involve competitions, the word sport has started to have many different meanings. As a result, it seems to me that, nowadays people tend to think of sports in a less competitive sense, even in the discussion on what is a sport.

However, it cannot also be denied that even sports like jogging and fitness, which are individualistic in nature, have been developed along with those sports with more competitive characteristics, i.e. marathon or aerobics. Whether or not a sport should be turned into a competition is a question that every new sport will face in the course of development, as with the case of so-called 'west coast sports' like surfing or Frisbee or with the case of 'X-sports', which is typified by various stunts performed on a 'half pipe'. With that in mind, even if it is a new sport, it can be argued that it cannot nevertheless avoid being influenced by the basic characteristics of a social phenomenon called sport. Every new sport is somehow linked to the culture of competitive sports, through a 'family resemblance' type of relationship.

- (30) Masahiro Inagaki, *Tennis to Dress—Tennis and Dresses*, 2002, pp.192-196.
- (31) Theodor Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, Routledge, 1990.
- (32) Michael Novak, *The Joy of Sports*, Basic Books, 1976, pp.18-21.

- (33) Janet Lever, *Soccer Madness*, University of Chicago Press, 1983, p.110.
- (34) Shun Inoue, 'Perspective toshitenno Asobi—Play as a perspective', in *Asobino Shakaigaku—Sociological Insight on Play*, 1977.
- (35) Shun Inoue, 'Bunka Shakaigakuteki Yugiron no Tenkai—The development of cultural sociological theories on play', in *Kobe Shoka Daigaku Jinbun Ronshu Vol.6*, 1970, pp.66-67.
- (36) Under Kantianism, on which Schiller completely relied, human freedom derives from individuals' independence from God's will and is therefore gained only through secular affairs and not through a secret discourse with God. Refer to Charles Taylor, *Hegel and Modern Society*, Cambridge University Press, 1979, for more information on Kantianism.
- (37) Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, Rowohlt, 1956, pp.187-188.
- (38) Richard Gruneau, *Class, sports and Social Development*, Human Kinetics, 1999.
- (39) John Hargreaves, *Sport, Power and Culture*, Polity Press, 1986.
- (40) Pierre Bourdieu, *La distinction critique sociale du jugement*, Éditions de Minuit, 1979.
- (41) Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: an introduction*, Verso, 1991, pp.112-114.
- (42) Tatsuo Inoue, *Tasha eno Jiyu—The Freedom to Others*, Sobunsha, 1999.