



GEOMORPHOLOGY AND SPORT A UNIQUE COMBINATION

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Abstract.

We believe Sport through its forms of expression and organization through quantitative and qualitative features of the participants and spectators, through the fact that it is an inseparable part of daily life on Earth by on-going Local, Regional, National or International area, requires a geographical analysis, where meet two essential parts: the space and time to which the analysis focused on the links between sports and place. The literature shows a large number of specialists in interdisciplinary studies on sport, geography and other scientific disciplines such as economics, medicine, sociology, tourism and many more. Through this study we aimed to present a series of conceptual and methodological arguments specific for geography and useful in spatial analysis in the field of sport, all supported by highlighting some representative papers in this interdisciplinary research field direction. All arguments converge to Gaffney's definition that "sport is inherently geographic."

Keywords: Geomorphology, Sport, Geography, Place, spatial analysis.

Introduction

The discipline of Sports through its organization and manifestation forms, through its built specific infrastructure, has become an inseparable part of society in general, the differences being of quantitative and qualitative nature and whose value is generated by the involvement degree of each actor as part of the society of the whole. The effects of spatial carrying on of sports activities are extremely varied, with wide visibility in the economic, social, cultural or medical domains and which can be carried on at local, regional, national or international level. The spatial analysis studies of sports have in many cases a multidisciplinary character by completing and consolidating the scientific endeavor with issues and methods specific to other domains. A integrated book who present the evolution of sport in various social sciences is edited by Mr. Maguire Joseph the book who promotes development of and through sport written by Mr. Vamplew W. Loland S., McNamee M., Lavalley D., Kremer J., Moran A., Klein, A., Maguire J., Gaffney C., Rowe D., Szymanski S., Grix J., Levermore R. & Beacom. A., Healey Deborah, Spaaij R., Thibault Lucie and Penney D.

By using certain geographic methods and tools of approaching sports, the most popular domain on Earth, the society benefits, on one hand, of extremely useful information regarding the spatial dimension of a sport branch or of sports generally and, on the other hand, of a scientific expertise referring to the support natural and anthropic elements for carrying on sport activities. Under such circumstances, the sport movement, diversified as type and form, generates local, regional or worldwide activities which through the manifestation manner and location produce benefits and development for the human society.

A clear example of activity generated, but also generating benefits for society and related to the sport activity is tourism. For a better understanding of the role of Geography, generally, and that of Geography of tourism especially, in such a spatial analysis it is emphasized the scientific paper work elaborated by Hall entitled *Progress in Tourism management: From the geography of tourism to geographies of tourism – A review*, in whose table of contents the authors present the role of geographic research in “explaining spatialities; tourism planning and places; development and its discontents etc...”. Starting from a definition of tourism unanimously accepted according to which “any person who travels from home towards one or several places or objectives having as purpose the recreation, rest, knowledge, performing activities other than those performed regularly”. We can include into this category all the participants to manifestations with sport character. The sporting events, through spectators and sportives the dynamic component generate tourist activity, being assimilated to the tourists or excursionists who, in turn, benefit of a variety of services provided with the occasion of the respective manifestations. The infrastructure the static component created form the purpose of carrying on the sport activities, be it temporary or permanent, represents the support element for these events and it can be included, either directly as support element of the manifestation, or indirectly by connecting or integrating it into the infrastructure for tourist activities hotels, restaurants etc. The international competitions Olympic, world, continental and regional are in this respect the most expressive in explaining the spatial analysis of the sportive phenomenon.

The complementarity between the two sciences, geography and sport and with other domains as well, more or less related, results especially from the role of the support-element of the geographic components in carrying on of sport activities. Thus, the prospection and scientific preparation of the territorial support of activities with sportive character, the understanding and causal explanation of their ongoing, providing the systemic functionality of component elements, all for the identification in the end of their impact upon society etc, are based on various working methods and techniques specific to geography combined in the scientific endeavor with those specific to sports, amongst which the most representative are the cartographic ones. Thus, the theoretical and methodological component facilitates the systemic understanding of phenomena by joining the cartographic part with the text, through analysis and synthesis, all with causal explanation role of phenomena and processes and of contouring territorial systems with a high degree of functionality.

The representative product of geographic analysis is the map as it reflects the essence of the geographic study (Figure - 1). The geographer usually produces two major types of maps: of public utility especially tourist, orientation maps with high degree of accessibility and understanding for non-specialists and maps with scientific character, more complex and usually accessible for specialists. Both types, through the work volume and information presented graphically, represent the icon of geographic endeavor useful for society. Thus the map has gradually become working means of spatial expression of phenomena for other sciences as well, with an important role in providing information for society. However, irrespective of the technological process with various types of software, GIS the impression of geography remains through its specific principles and methods used.

Another defining component of geographic analysis is the methodological part based on a system of specific principles and methods, but which is also neighboring with other disciplines, all with the purpose of providing “the methodological orientation and general direction to be followed in the use of knowledge procedures such as the correlation between part and whole, between analysis and synthesis, between spatial analysis and chronological analysis”.

The principles which guide, the methods and tools which facilitate the geographic analysis or the spatial analysis of a phenomenon or process and which represented the basis of geographic scientific foundation, they can all be extremely useful in the spatial analysis of sports activities under all their

structural and manifestation forms. According to specialty literature the principles most used in geographic studies with applicability in the spatial analysis of sports are: spatial distribution, causality, hierarchy, structuralism, correlation, integration, chronology etc, and as methods and tools, we mention: observation, description, comparison, explanation, analysis and synthesis, modeling and the most representative one, the cartographic method, strongly influenced recently by Geographic Information System (GIS) tool. During the past years, GIS, through the multitude of applications and the facility to manage and fast transpose a data base into images in cartographic form, makes modeling as work method and the model as graphic or material expression to be extremely used in establishing various causal correlations, in knowing the mechanism by deciphering and understanding each component part, their dynamics and especially in the increase of capacity and accuracy of predicting various phenomena and processes. Everything is accomplished on the background of quantitative and qualitative diversification and amplification of modeling variants of the territorial design according to the structure of the used data base. Finally, such an endeavor becomes very useful in elaborating territorial planning strategies with the purpose of contouring territorial systems with a functionality degree as high as possible. To what has been mentioned above, the regional method is added based on “the selective and integrated study of geographic phenomena and processes within a given territory and whose originality comes from the frontal approach of an extremely complicated phenomenology, with the purpose of determining the structure, vectors and function of the system thus contoured the concrete result is the functional organization of the territory”.

However, it has to be mentioned the fact that a complex paper work of Geography of sports cannot be based on a single principle. Usually, at the level of scientific endeavor, we identify a sum of principles, methods and tools carefully chosen by the author, so as the obtained results would be the most convincing and useful. In a quick radiography we shall try to present a series of representative paper works in order to prove the usefulness for society of systemic construction between sports and geography.

The role of space and time in the geographic analysis of sports is determined by the specifics of the geographic science. The spatial distribution and temporal sequences of a phenomenon and the contouring of a territorial design according to the features of the analyzed element represent the trail of a classical and complete geographic scientific endeavor. Thus, through geographic analysis, there are reflected quantitative and qualitative aspects of system component elements, of the most representative or dominant ones, all emphasized by sketching up the geographic regional design under the form of the objective, region or area which, in turn, reflect the geographic zoning or non-zoning, all encompassed in the geographic time which is reflected through features such as: recurrence, succession, flexibility and irreversibility.

A fundamental paper work with clear directions of geographic analysis of sport in all its manifestation forms is the one elaborated in two editions by the most representative and copious specialist in the domain Sport Geography. Infrastructure is defining in contouring the place. Thus, it's spatial analysis and, implicitly, of sporting events, represents a consistent part in the specialty literature. Organizing events at any scale implies human mobility and flow differentiated through volume, distance and direction depending on the event width. The importance of such studies is strongly reflected in the organizing politics of the local, regional, national, continental or international space, endeavors with major impact in society. A study in this direction is the one elaborated by Ahlfeldt & Feddersen entitled Geography of sport metropolis, focused on the role played by the localization of sport infrastructure of Hamburg, Germany from the residents` perspective. Moreover, the spatial analysis is supported by mathematic modeling.

The spatial analysis of sports plays an important role in the territorial planning and organization politics, aspect promoted by the French geographer August in the book Sport, geography and management.

In Netherlands as well, most studies focused on the relation between geography and territorial planning have as analysis subject sport arenas. Other preoccupations in the same direction are those concerning urban development and sport infrastructure Thornley, Turner & Rosentraub, Kozma & Suli-Zakar.

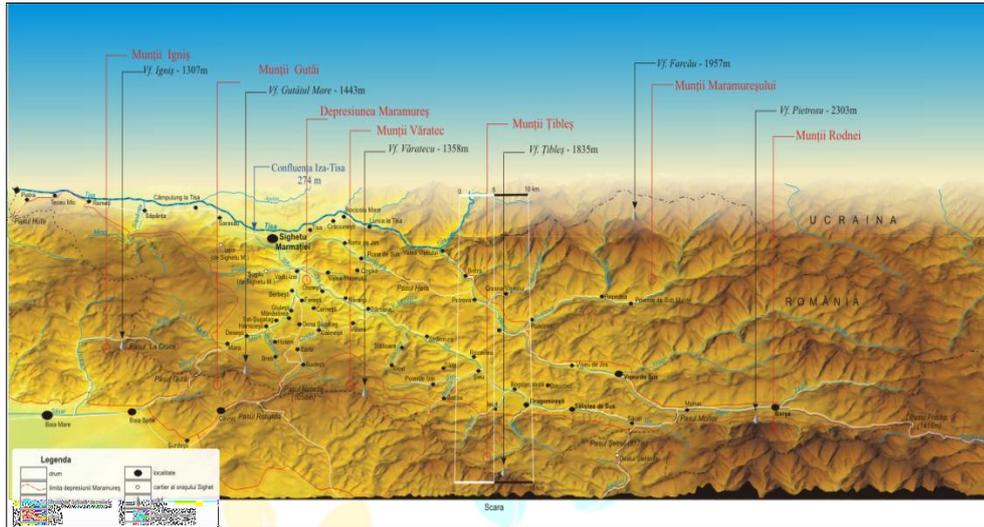


Figure 1.

Example of 3D map of relief-support for geographical analysis. Maramureș Land



Figure 2.

Environment and Infrastructure for leisure, sport and agreement.

Marina of Le Marin Martinique;

For geography and for sport, tourism is an important connector for the two domains, either through infrastructure as support static component for the spatial carrying on of sporting events or through spectators and sportives dynamic component assimilated to the tourist flow. Hall and Page review the geographic contributions in tourism studies focused on: explaining spatialities; tourism planning and places; development and its discontents; tourism as an ‘applied’ area of research, and future prospects. The relation between sport geography and spending free time can be encountered in the study edited by Witherick and Warn or the relation between sport, tourism and development, or between sport, tourism and leisure. In Romania, from the specialty literature and amongst the studies in which the sport activity is reflected directly or indirectly through infrastructure organization are the geographic studies of tourism, out of which we mention those elaborated by Muntele & Iașu, Ciangă & Dezsı, Ilieș M, Gozner etc.

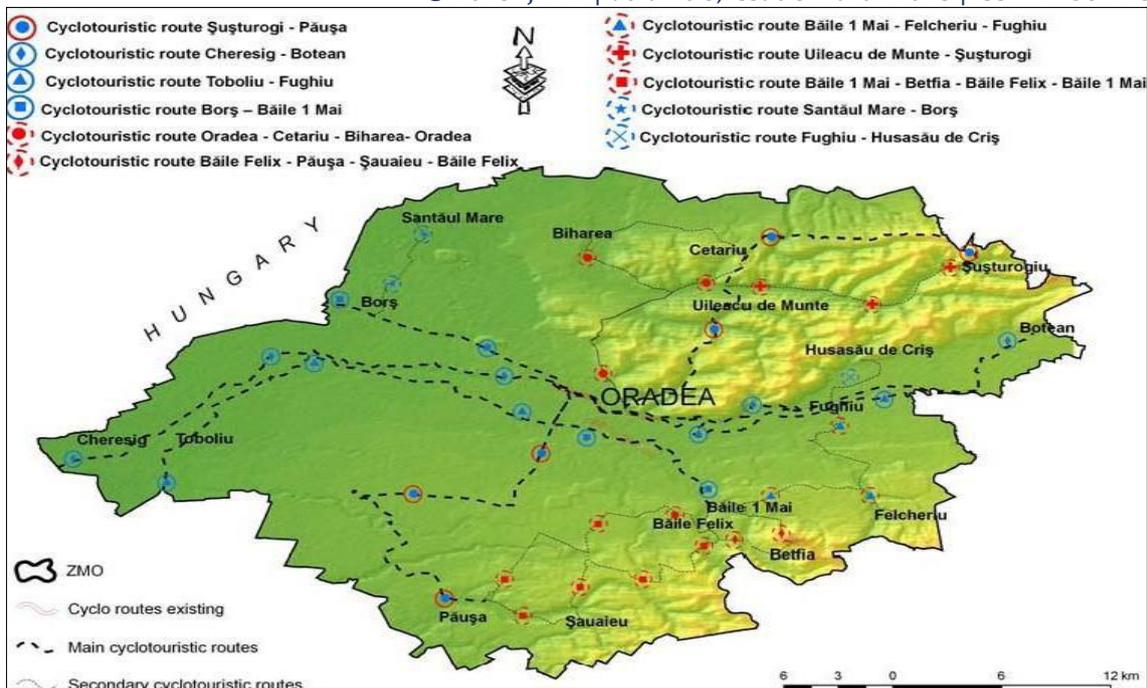


Figure 3. Map of cyclotouristic routes proposed for Oradea metropolitan Area Ilieş Dorina et al.

The interdisciplinary character of geographic analysis can be encountered in the study Sport and Time geography : A good match? Elaborated by Moore and al and proposes “using the rich visual language” of Hager strand’s time geography to represent time-space relationships in sport, in particular within the spatial and temporal constraints of a game of rugby” or in the study entitled Common Ground? Links between Sports History, Sports Geography, and Sociology of Sports elaborated by Maguire. Other studies are focused on spatial analysis of: financial impact upon sport in case of Belgian football Demause & Cagan, Dejonghe & Van Opstal, spatial distributions of sport connected workforce flow by Bale & Maguire, Dejonghe & Van Opstal, Kozma et al organization of sport activities on geographic principles and criteria Guy, Dejonghe, Jackson & Haigh.



Figure 4. Cartographic distribution of sport activities represented by symbols of balls. Example: Fragment of the map: Crişana-Maramureş. Sport, infrastructure and sport activities Ilieş et al.

All sport geography studies are based on the map which, through specific execution methods and

means, reflects the local, regional or international impact of sport. Maps “are graphical representations which facilitates the understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes or phenomena in the human world” Harley & Woodward. Such studies are those elaborated by : Mathieu & Praicheux, Rooney & Pillsbury, Bale, Gozner, Pop (figure 5), Ilieș Al. et al etc, in which the cartographic representation represents the focal point of the scientific endeavor.

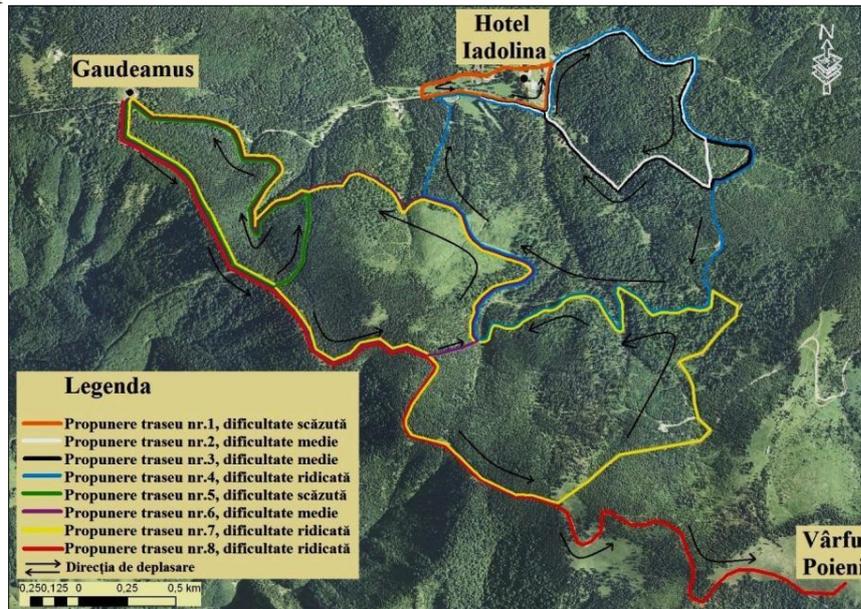


Figure 5.

Model of map used in activity of tourist planning in Apuseni Mountains. Ski area Pop.

Geographic studies of relief and geomorphology (Figure 1 and 2; Widmer, Voiculescu, Baca & Ștefanescu, climatology Chambers et al., Teodoreanu & Gaceu, hydrology, human geography, political geography Darnell & Ilieș et al, social geography Kozma et al., territorial planning Bale, Essex & Chalkley, Hall, Dehoorne et al., Wendt, Ilieș D. et al., (Figure 3); Baca & Ștefanescu, belong to the category of those which through their results create conditions for the support of carrying on sporting events.

Conclusion

Through the richness of elaborated studies and those which could not be included in this material because of space limitation, we can consider sport as part of the existence and manifestation of the contemporary world and which is reflected in society through the highest popularity out of all its manifestation forms. Practiced on the entire planet “sport is inherently geographic” Gaffney. The geographic analysis provides the support of carrying on sports under all its manifestation and structural forms, and it also it spatially analyzes its consequences upon environment and society, with the purpose of identifying the most efficient solutions in contouring territorial systems with high degree of functionality.

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