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For Geography and Sport, Sport Geography or Geography of Sport

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Abstract. 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 fields as economics, medicine, sociology, tourism etc. Through this study we aimed to present a series of conceptual and methodological arguments specific for geography and useful in spatial analysis 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: Sport Geography, Geography of Sport, Sport and Place, spatial analysis

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 Maguire Joseph (2014), the book who promotes development of and through sport written by leading figures: Vamplew W. (History); Loland S. & McNamee M. (Phylosophy); Lavallee D., Kremer J., Moran A. (Psychology); Klein, A. (Anthropology); Maguire J. (Sociology); Gaffney C. (Geography); Rowe D. (Media studies); Szymanski S. (Economics); Grix J. (Political Science); Levermore R. & Beacom A. (International relations); Healey Deborah (Law); Spaaij R. (Social policy); Thibault Lucie (Management) and Penney D. (Education).

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 & Page (2008) 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” (Coccean et al., 2002, 20), 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 (Ilieș et al., 2014, 280). 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 (Bale, 1989; 2003; Gaffney, 2010; 2014; Conner, 2014a; Jackson, 2014).

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 (Ianoş, 2000) with a high degree of functionality (Ilieş et al., 2012).

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 (Ahlfeldt & Maenning, 2010; Zale & Bandana, 2012), 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" (Coteş and Nedelcu, 1976, 12).

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 (Coteş & Nedelcu, 1976; Mac, 2000; 2008; Cocean, 2005; Petrea, 2005; Ielenicz & Comănescu, 2013), 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 GIS tool (Ahlfeldt & Maenning, 2010; Zale & Bandana, 2012). 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*" (Cocean, 2005, 138).

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* (Cocean, 2005, 50).

In order to emphasize the evolution of scientific determination between the two domains, *Sport* and *Geography*, Bale & Dejonghe (2008) published in *Belgeo* journal an article entitled *Sport Geography: an overview* (157-166), where they presented a full radiography of representative authors and paper works in the domain geography of sports. For the early stages, there are mentioned the first studies which approached such an issue and they were elaborated by Elisee Reclus (1879) and Hildebrand (1919). In the same editorial there is a series of themes focused on: sport migration; relationship between the location of sports teams in their stadium and neighbourhood and the local identity; impact of sporting events or sport stadiums on a certain area; sport, geography and territorial planning. In another study, *Geography of Sports*, Gaffney (2014, 109) considers that the first geographic study focused on the issue of a sport in the American Literature was Albert Carlson's (1942) treatment of skiing in New England (Bale and Dejonghe, 2008).

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, the British John Bale (1989; 2003), entitled *Sport Geography*. Geographic specificity is obvious both in the title and in the content focused on certain key topics: "space and place; location and landscape; geographic diffusion; globalization; economics; the community; and geographic imaginations"¹. In 1994, on the same geographic analysis of sport line, Bale elaborated another representative paper work entitled *Landscape of modern sport*. Previous to the two theoretically and methodologically fundamental works, Bale published another article focused on *Sport and place in British space* (1982). *Sport Geography* has as theoretical and practical foundation the link between sport and place (Bale, 1982b), "employed geographic modeling and economic models to predict ideal locations for sport teams and facilities" (Gaffney, 2014, 112). In a theoretical sense of defining *Place*, it is "a portion of territory of a certain size and a certain shape which has a material, energetic and informational content" (Mac, 2000). We notice the importance of spatially defining its features and, implicitly, the applicability of such an endeavor for the impact of sport in all its manifestation and structural forms upon

¹<http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199874002/obo-9780199874002-0067.xml>

society. The importance and complexity of place are provided by its attributes: absolute or relative localization; extension; geographic content, spatial structure; dynamics in time space, content and functions (Mac, 2000). Additionally, other studies are focused on analyzing the elements which establish the territorial design of the place (Bale, 1998; Hall, 2008), the site (Bale & Vertinsky, 2004; Ilieș & Josan, 2009; Kozma et al., 2014b) or its reflection in the local (Bale & Moen, 1995; Shobe, 2008; Kozma & Suli-Zakar, 2012), regional (Gaffney, 2008; 2010) or international (Giulianotti & Williams, 1994; Augustin, 1995; 2007; Hallinan & Jackson, 2008; Scherer & Jackson, 2010) cultural space.

Considered by Bale the father of modern Sport Geography, the American geographer John Rooney (1974), examining "regional variations of sport practices and player origins in the United States" (Gaffney, 2014, 110), emphasizes the role of special analysis in the sport domain in his article *A geography of American Sport: From Cabin Creek to Anaheim*. Rooney's role in promoting *Sport Geography* is defining as the American, together with other authors, edited in 1987 the first specialty journal entitled *Sport and Place. An international journal of sports geography*, which appeared regularly until 2000. The role of this publication was to continue "the tradition of choropleth map-based studies also included more humanistic and interpretative papers" (Bale & Dejonghe, 2008, 2).

Infrastructure is defining in contouring the place. Thus, its 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 (2010, 11) 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. In the same trend of defining the place through sport infrastructure elements, Bale (2000) in chapter 7 *The Changing face of Football: Stadiums and Communities* develops the idea that "professional football clubs represent place large and small-villages, towns, cities and nations" (2000, 91). Bale & Moen (1995) in the book *The stadium and the city* emphasizes the role of the stadium in defining the cultural space of a city. Gaffney (2008; 2010; 2013) and Gaffney & Mascarenhas (2008) through his works focused on the role of stadium and of international events in defining the Brazilian cultural space is on the same analysis direction. Shobe (2008) through *Football and the politics of place: Football Club Barcelona and Catalonia* contributes with a clear example of cultural space defining and of contouring its polarization area through football. Studies focused on international impact of certain sports and events are those elaborated by Giulianotti & Williams (1994), Giulianotti (1999), Tiesler & Coelho eds. (2008), Horne & Manzenreiter (2002; 2006), Giulianotti & Robertson (2007) Cho (2009), Cho et al. (2012), Conner (2014b), Jackson (2014) etc. The social impact reflected through politics and media can be found in Trumbour's work (2007), who associates stadiums with "new cathedrals". Bale & Gowing (1976) propose use football to teach geography, DeChano & Shelley (2006) propose a series of ways "which demonstrates how sports can be used to teach geographic concepts using example from Kansas City" or the same idea for Latin America (Gaffney, 2006).

The spatial analysis of sports plays an important role in the territorial planning and organization politics, aspect promoted by the French geographer Augustin (1995)

in the book *Sport, géographie et aménagement*. 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, 2002; Turner & Rosentraub, 2000; Kozma & Suli-Zakar, 2012).

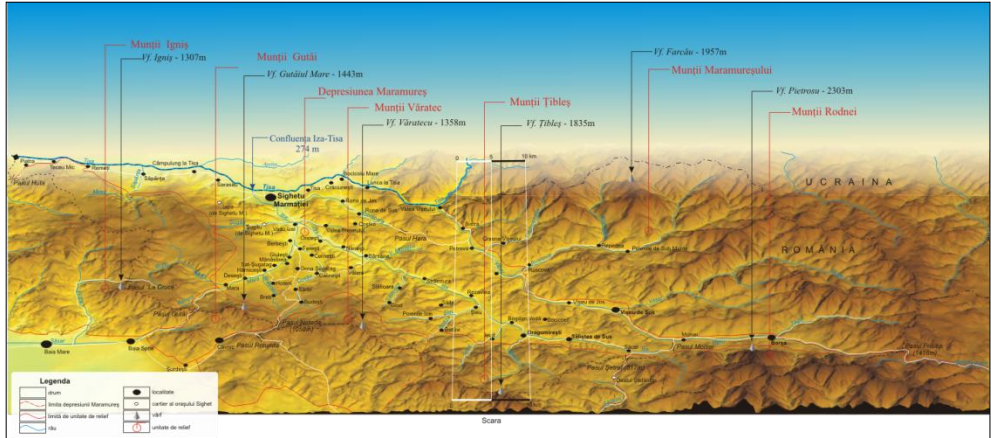


Figure 1. Example of 3D map of relief-support for geographical analysis. Maramureș Land (source: Ilieș M. in Ilieș Al. et al., 2014, p. 100)



Figure 2. Environment and Infrastructure for leisure, sport and agreement. Marina of Le Marin (Martinique); (source photo Dehoorne, 2006)

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 (Wendt, 2011,9). Hall and Page (2008) 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 (2003) or the relation between sport, tourism and development, or between sport, tourism and leisure (Wendt, 2011, 35). 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 & Iațu, 2006; Ciangă & Dezsi, 2007; Ilieș M, (2007); Gozner (2011); Pop (2014); Ilieș and al., (2014) etc.

The interdisciplinary character of geographic analysis can be encountered in the study *Sport and Time geography: A good match?* elaborated by Moore and al. (2003) and proposes "using the rich visual *language*" of Hägerstrand'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 (1995). Other studies are focused on spatial analysis of: financial impact upon sport in case of Belgian football (Demaese & Cagan, 2008, Dejonghe & Van Opstal, 2010); spatial distributions of sport connected workforce flow (Bale & Maguire, 1994; Dejonghe & Van Opstal, 2009; 2010; Kozma et al., 2014a); organization of sport activities on geographic principles and criteria (Guy, 1997; Dejonghe, 2004; Jackson & Haigh, 2009).

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, 1987, XVI, cited in Mac, 2008, 142). Such studies are those elaborated by: Mathieu & Praicheux (1987), Rooney & Pillsbury (1992), Bale (1993b), Gozner (2011), Pop (2014; figure 5), Ilieș Al. et al (2014) etc, in which the cartographic representation represents the focal point of the scientific endeavor (figure 4).

Geographic studies of relief and geomorphology (Figure 1 and 2; Widmer, 2011; Voiculescu, 2012; Băcă & Ștefănescu, 2014), climatology (Chambers et al., 2003; Teodoreanu & Gaceu, 2013), hydrology, human geography, political geography (Darnell, 2012; Ilieș et al, 2012), social geography (Kozma et al., 2014a), territorial planning (Bale, 1993a; Essex & Chalkley, 2004; Hall, 2008; Dehoorne et al., 2010; Wendt, 2011; Ilieș D. et al., 2013 (Figure 3); Băcă & Ștefănescu, 2014) belong to the category of those which through their results create conditions for the support of carrying on sporting events.

In 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, 2014, 109). 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.

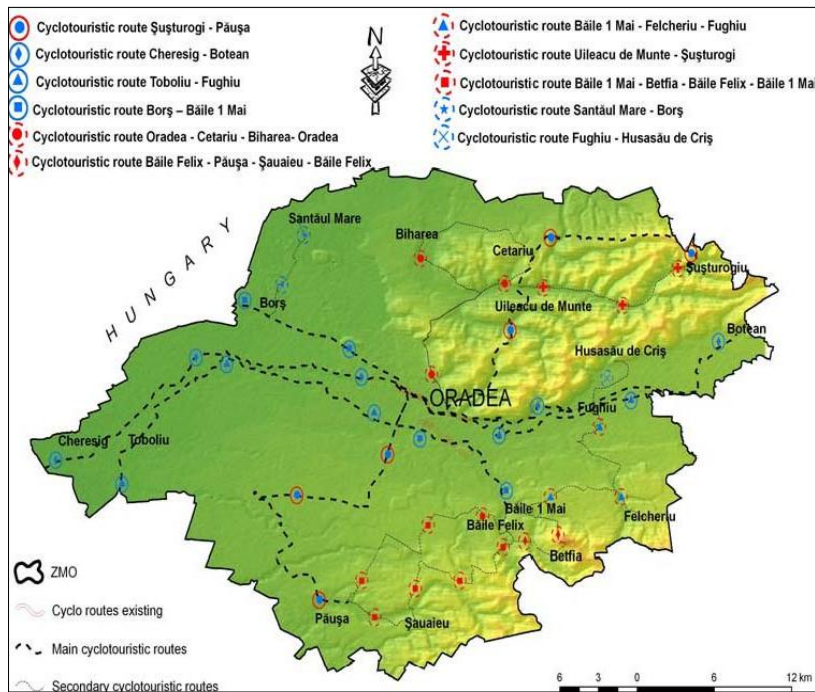


Figure 3. Map of cyclotouristic routes proposed for Oradea metropolitan Area (Ilieș Dorina et al., 2013, 108)



Figure 4. Cartographic distribution of sport activities represented by symbols (balls). Exemple: Fragment of the map: Crișana-Maramureș. Sport, infrastructure and sport activities (Ilieș et al., 2014, 284)

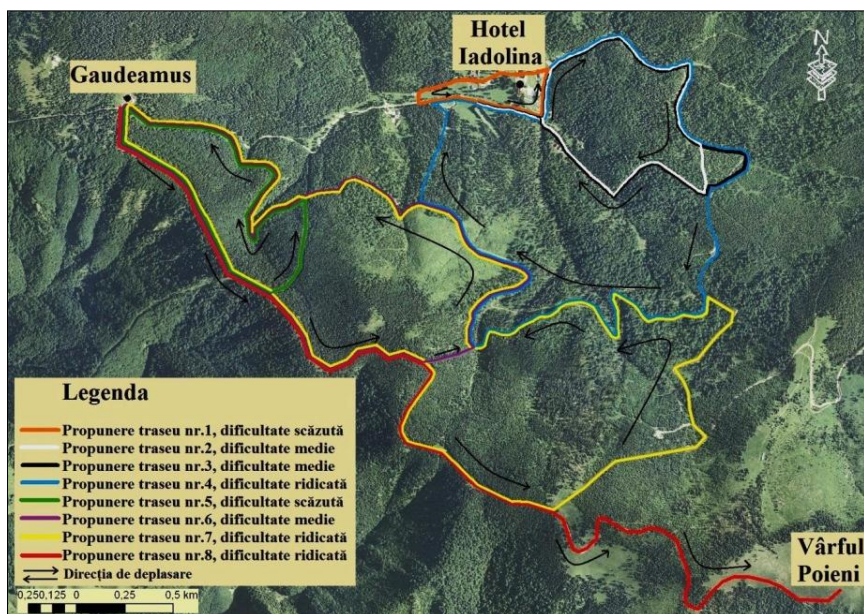


Figure 5. Model of map used in activity of tourist planning in Apuseni Mountains. Ski area (Pop, 2014, 134)

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