

Answering questions

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



1. In many countries of the world football and hockey (or other type of team game) can easily substitute religion and culture. Game is an important component of human activity. In 1938 a Dutch historian and cultural theorist Johan Huizinga wrote a book “ Homo Ludens” (“ Playing Man”). It discusses the importance of the element of game in culture and society. Reflecting on the connection of games and culture, Huizinga notes, that culture is the child of game and has a character of game. In terms of Huizinga, competition is the essence of any game, which is an expression of will to power. Since the early childhood people are involved in game activity. It starts as education and continues as entertainment. The apotheosis of game is war. In their essays Kofi Annan and Tim Bowling compare football and hockey to “ serious” human activities, such as the UN and war.

Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the UN in 1997-2006, compares football with the UN. Both are international activities and both have about 200 countries as participants: “ as the pinnacle of the only truly global game, played in every country by every race and religion, it is one of the few phenomena as universal as the UN” (Annan 234). Annan argues that the UN should be more like football for people. He dreams of “ citizens consumed by the topic of how their country could do better on the Human Development Index, or exercised about how to reduce carbon emissions or HIV infections” (Annan 234). Indeed, if people were as interested in the UN activities as they are in football, this world would be a much more pleasant place. In my opinion Annan is wrong, because he compares different things. The most important difference is that the UN suggests cooperation, and football is competition. This is the fault of all organizations of such type. They can't

stop people from competing and fighting. The predecessor of the UN—the League of Nations—failed to prevent the Second World War, just as the UN failed to prevent the USA aggression in the Middle East. Nothing can change the human nature. That is why the UN and football are the phenomena of different orders. The Human Development Index and HIV infections are important, without doubt, but they can never be as important as game.

2. That is why I completely agree to Tim Bowling's argument that the game of hockey is like war. It was stated above that game is the important element of culture and that war is also a game, most bloody, but most taking one. Two (or more) teams compete for supremacy, or for other goal. War has its rules, international conventions, codes of honor, prizes, etc. It has winners and losers. It has coaches and referees. And, there is no nation in the world which has never been engaged in warfare.

Bowling considers hockey as a “ particular form of patriotism” (Bowling 240). As an example he tells of “ the tension of the 1972 Summit Series between Canada and the USSRSSR, in which Team Canada won the final three games behind the Iron Curtain to retain global hockey supremacy” (Bowling 239). This example is brilliant – two parties, which are ideological rivals, compete at the arena. It looked so much like warfare, that when one player knocked another player (from another team) out of the series, it was considered as a patriotic act.

Football, hockey, basketball – they all are substitutes of war, when conducted at international level. During Euro 2012 fans were fighting beyond the stadiums, journalists were fighting in the media, even politicians mentioned victories and defeats as national events. The fight between

Russian and Polish fans was not sport – it was a small moment of warfare. It was one ideology and culture fighting another one. Bowling is absolutely right comparing sport and nationhood. When wars are too expensive and bloody, sport can be a substitution. And it is good.

References

Annan, K. “Football Envy at the UN.” *Essay Writing for Canadian Students with Readings, 6/E*. Ed. Kay L. Stewart, Roger Davis, Chris J. Bullock, Marian E. Allen. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada, 2008. 234-235. Print.

Bowling, T. “Na Na Na Na, Hey Hey Hey, Goodbye.” *Essay Writing for Canadian Students with Readings, 6/E*. Ed. Kay L. Stewart, Roger Davis, Chris J. Bullock, Marian E. Allen. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada, 2008. 237-241. Print.