

Sport and Religion, the Specificity of Polish Stadiums

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Abstract : It would seem at first glance that sport and religion are totally separate spheres. Yet, as a matter of fact, sport exists in religion (for example, In the teachings of John Paul II) and religion exists in sport (not only in religious rituals of players and fans). In this paper, the author examining the specific behaviours of Polish football fans and players analyses the question of religion in sport, mostly football. Like in the case of other countries, football holds a special place in Polish sporting history which constitutes an interesting subject of scientific research. It is a great identity builder and it influences culture which manifests itself in many ways (films, music, literature, etc.). Football is definitely a fascinating and colourful discipline pervaded with miscellaneous phenomena worth analysing. The aim of the paper is to show the "religious" uniqueness of Polish football fandom -namely, religious choreographies, participation in masses and pilgrimages to the Jasna Gora Shrine in Częstochowa. The peculiar combination of sport and religion visible at the stadiums and during the pilgrimages is analysed by the author. This mixture definitely adds colour to Polish sport and makes it intriguing to people from other countries. Religious rituals of the players are also examined here. The methods of the research included: Observations of numerous matches, looking through sports books, newspapers and magazines, interviews with the fans. The conclusions corroborate the thesis that sport may be and often is an important element of sporting contests. The main reasons and justifications are given in this analysis.

Keywords : football, religion, sport, colourful, newspapers

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