

Summary

A Summary Report from the "Sports Looks in the Mirror"-lecture series held in Helsinki, Autumn 1999.

What can be seen in the mirror of sports when it is lit up by media and money? What can be told of the 1947 Suurkisat by the methods of psycho-history? Why sports not only united but also divided the Finnish? How to become a guiding star for a county like Kitee, the best Finnish baseball team, did? This yearbook deals with these topics as well as the renaissance health advice, the sanctity of sports and bio-power in sports, containing the contributions of altogether eighteen authors.

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The department of Social History and its unit of Political History together with the Society for Sports History organized in Autumn 1999 a lecture series dealing with the past and present of the 20th century. Most of the lectures are published here in this yearbook (Vasara, Kanerva, Puronaho and Virtapohja) and their contents are summarized by docent Erkki Vasara as follows:

At the beginning the 20th century sports played a definite role among the movements moulding the civil society: it gathered young people in healthy and active company. It took care of the fighting fitness of the recruits of the army and it was a close ally of the temperance movement until the end of the World War II.

From the very start sports seemed to acquire some societal tasks, too. This was highlighted when Finns gained fame in Olympics, especially in Stockholm 1912. Sports was a vehicle to enhance self-confidence in times when the future of a Finnish state appeared gloomy. As the battles of the Civil War of 1918 proved that sportsmen of both camps were best soldiers, the link

between sports and heroism propagated by Ivar Wilskman and Lauri Pihkala was also corroborated. Through civil guards sports was connected to the ideology of the defense of the country in 'White Finland'. Work among boys in civil guards and gymnastics at school aimed at training physically strong and strong-nerved youth.

Success in Olympics gave a boost to sports while ordinary physical exercise among people was declining. Olympics and international sports in general made an impact on the division of Finnish sports into two: the Sports Federation for Workers (est. 1919) remained aloof from the bourgeois sports movement, and accordingly did not gain representation in national Olympic teams. Workers Sports Federation (TUL) could not accept the bourgeois federation's (SVUL) relations to civil guards, and bourgeois federation which regarded itself as impartial, did not accept TUL's open politization, and its relations to working class movement. TUL had often to suffer losses of state support. TUL did at least as well in competitions of the international workers sports movement as Finland fared in Olympics. The politization of sports was an international phenomenon, and Finland was closely attached to it.

Professionalism gained foothold already before the World Wars. This was not all – some sportsmen were not temperate and consumed alcohol, and this was known already when sports and temperance movements flirted at the beginning of this century. Everything was not going as well as was "planned".

Development during the latter part of this century has been immensely rapid on the track as well as outside it. The patriotic and military pathos of the 1920–30s had to disappear from sports and a reappraisal was also timely for the temperance movement as a part of physical culture. The urbanization process of the 1960s affected also values; now it became more acceptable to drink. Moderate drinking was accepted also by the sports and temperance movements. Widening international relations brought new forms of sports to Finland; this invasion does not seem to have an end. Also ordinary people took to physical exercise in the name of health, more and more so outside organized sports.

Younger and younger people take part in sports. Under school aged have ice-hockey and other popular sports as their

hobby which carry away all the family in competitive activities. The best are chosen to form future teams. A lot of money is being spend in equipment and gasoline. There is a lot of training and enthusiasm in it, but how to deal with disappointments if skill and abilities fail to make a rise to higher levels possible? What is the point of exercise then?

Where people are active, there one can find also businessmen as sponsors or producers of equipment. Sports has become ever more popular as individual or 'bench' sports, and this is detected by media and the organizers of sports 'happenings' – they provide beer pavilions. Media creates heroes, but is merciless to losers at will. Marketing has taken over sports which has become huge business. Olympics has become sour because of greed and swelling of the Olympics by the Olympic Committee. Athens lost to Atlanta in 1996; the American dollar was tastier than revernce for the history of sports. Where can the limit to the power of money be put?

Money and success are factors, on the altars of which doping is only one secretly accepted manner to gain success in order to get more money. In post-modern sports, its hectic rhythm, dopings, champagne and cigars one can find many of the features of decay attacked by Wilskman and Pihkala at the beginning of the century. Their panacea was sports. And what could be the corrective against the values of the top sports of the day?

What can top sports give to the next century? Different forms of physical culture belong to the same family, and one should ask, can we find among them such common factors that could serve human beings as individuals as well as citizens also in the future. Or do we have to do with what we have now, various separate physical cultures which act separately, top sports as huge entertainment and big business, local competitions as a venue for the ordinary man's instinct for success to come to the fore, or people's own fitness and recreation exercise as a firm basis for the future.

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Timo Joutsivuo

In the Footsteps of the Great Gargantua: Physical Exercise and Health in Renaissance Medicine

Physical exercise had its place in the theory and practise of the Renaissance medicine. On one hand, it was a part of medical doctrine, on the other, it was essential in the formation of a healthy human being. Without physical exercise the ideal of a harmonic, balanced and well-proportioned man could not be reached.

Although the ideas of Renaissance doctors appear to have been in harmony with the meanings of physical culture given by the pedagogues, they largely diverted from the insights of our times. Physical culture served the tasks to develop a wholesome human being whether the aim was to support the rise of a *l'uomo universale* or a properly healthy man. These goals can be dated back to classical models. Renaissance doctors and pedagogues both tried to realize ideals which they thought had been the everyday life in antiquity.

Physical exercise was understood as a natural part of man's activity. Renaissance scholars thought that physical exercise was fundamentally mental and physical. When physical exercises were performed for their own sake, i.e. in another sense than to achieve a healthy life fitting to the person in question, it was viewed with reserve, even disapproval. According to doctors, physical exercise had always to be considered in relation to the individual and his state of health, not in relation to other or outer objectives. Rabelais's Gargantua thus manifests the ironic treatment of the phenomenon which prevailed amongst the scholars of his times.

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Anneli Kokkola

Health in Aviation

The Finnish keen on aviation founded a society called Aeroclubben in Finland, Suomen Ilmailuklubi, in 1919. An agreement of international aviation was signed in Paris in 1919,

and Finland joined it in 1931. The agreement contained also regulations on health inspection. The Finns have taken up and compete in parachuting, hang-gliding, parachute-gliding??, hot-air-ballooning, glider flying, ultra-light and motor-flying. National Board of Civil Aviation has given quite detailed instructions on health inspection, on the definition of the classification of qualification requirements, and has required a continuous follow-up for the medical qualifications. An aviator has to maintain his/her physical and psychic stamina in an exemplary manner.

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Ilkka Levä

"We are still alive!": The Suomen Suurkisat in 1947 as a Ritual to Regain 'White' Domination.

In the opening ceremony of the Suomen Suurkisat (a great sporting event) V.A. Karikoski stated: "We are still alive!". The War had ended some years ago but only in 1947 Karikoski felt "alive". How can this statement be understood? More generally, what was displayed in the Suurkisat? The question cannot be answered by the ordinary methods of political history, it is to be understood by the change in the psychological meanings of the Suurkisat.

This analysis is carried on by the methods of psycho-history which deals with group fantasies articulated in collective unconsciousness (of the Finns). People defend themselves against desires, fears and hopes of childhood by group fantasies. The unconscious is manifested in these charged fantasies.

The Suurkisat were culturally and politically conditioned. The elite carrying the ideas of former, collective nationalism felt threatened and begun to restore the regime.

The Suurkisat was made, as Karikoski put it, "a reality". The regaining of national reality or cosmos is here studied with reference to Mircea Eliade's idea of domination of the chaos (here: post-war Finland) by a cosmogonic event. National "reality" which had been overwhelmed by chaotic meanings was regained by conquering the collective unconscious with new

meanings, and thus also conquering the objective reality. The necessity of the conquest was based on threat which was expressed by the unbounded 'liveliness' in masses. Following Roland Barthes, it can be said that the search for support in national myths transformed what had happened into a naturally intelligible historical matter.

According to Klaus Theweleit the rituals of the Suurkisat can be seen as functioning as a means to channel the 'flowing production of desires'?. On display in processions and shows was the 'formally coded flow of desires'?? which did not because of its form spill over but dammed the masculinized flows of feministic streams. Individuals moulded into mass did not at all resent this. When marching in formations they could at the same time be visible and invisible under the protection of the responsible whole. In organized form they could free themselves from the castration of the repressive times which was represented by the Russian delegates of the Allied Commission in Finland, and they could be a part of the signifying national and sporting phallos. This interpretation is only a part of the truth but it makes the strong feelings laden in sports of the post-war Finland intelligible.

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Jussi Turtiainen

Health Education in the Stadion, 1963-1980

After the World War II various "bio-political" means were being used in order to promote the *elan vital* and health of the population. Physical exercise and its political agenda was connected to this project in the 1960-70s. Scientific data was used in order to legitimate them and the rise of the role of state in controlling physical culture. The aim of health education in physical exercise was to make the whole population take on physical exercise and take care of their health; physical exercise as a healthy way of life was to be rooted deep in the Finnish society.

Health, education, physical exercise, population and society were the key-words, around which the political and educational

debate on physical exercise was carried during the decades under consideration here. Politics concerning physical education became a "bio-political" project to maintain and improve the health of the population. It was rather bio-power, not repression. Education guided towards a healthy and sporty behaviour. In stead of repressive discipline physical exercise and its way of life was normatized by appealing to *positive impact of physical exercise*.

Physical exercise was no longer grounded on moral ideas but on scientific and rational ones. Laws of nature and biology dictated the rules, according to which one had to perform exercises and organize one's way of life. Increasing leisure was to be allotted to instructive hobbies and the organization of the leisure activities were to become society's task before "juvenile delinquency, alcoholism and unemployment ... thrusts it on us".

The role of the welfare state was in these processes pivotal. The realization of the programme demanded active youth, health and physical education policies. State and its policies concerning physical education were nominated as main responsible bodies. As the model for sporty life-style was chosen keep-fit exercise because it was regarded as an effective maintainer of health. Paradoxically, physical educators and health promoters presented keep-fit exercises as unnormative form of physical exercise. Nevertheless, it was rather a way of setting up different norms in relation to former physical education and instruction based on control. Normative onus was now on health requirements and self-control, on one's own responsibility in physical exercise.

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Harri Salimäki

Lauri Pihkala and the Mystery of "The Will to Live".

This article deals with Lauri "Tahko" Pihkala's relation to Christian belief and philosophy of religion. Pihkala's religion is here revealed as a belief in blind Will as a "fundamental truth" of life and existence. Blind "Will to Live" (Schopenhauer) was Pihkala's god although he did not name it one. Through sports

– especially as spontaneous and instinctive exertion – Pihkala tried to conquer reality. Sports as exertion and competition was a ritual in Pihkala's religion, a kind of divine service or devotional exercise of the blind "Will to Live". It was a means to momentarily relieve oneself from the pain of living dictated by the blind Will and to act according its demands. In sports Pihkala found for himself the holy dimension which gave meaning and purpose for existence not only for an individual but also for the nation.

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Eveliina Vainio

Anni Collan and the Opportunity for Women's Physical Exercise

According to Anni Collan the meaning of physical education for women was comprehensive. First, it led women outdoors to learn co-operation, healthy leisure activities and to make friends. Secondly, physical exercises made women healthy and strong. Thirdly, Collan thought that physical education would make women so independent that they would start to oppose the restrictions of society and fashion. Primary goal for Collan was individual development which could be followed by another, final and wider goal, the development of the nation and society.

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Samu Karvala

Sports Could Also Divide a Tough and Strong Nation

At the beginning of the 20th century newspapers were primarily organs of their parties so that their sport reporters' opinions had to follow the editorial suit. The ideals and unpolitical nature of sports were the guiding lines for most of the them. Most of them were also ready to compromise their principles if party strife invaded sports, as the case-study from the year 1906

shows. Sports was no island in society in those times. The political passions of the hectic times raged also in sports movement in the years of 1906-1917. The sports pages of the newspapers covered also the language strife and bourgeois and working class sports loomed large. Political battle took over the sports people, too.

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Tero Matkaniemi

From Culture of Organizations to Mixed Fields: Ruptures in Karelian Working Class Sports

In general, the history of the Karelian working class sports follow the main lines of the history of Finnish physical culture: the culture of organizations reigned from the turn of the century to the 1930s, a culture based on combination of hobby and competition from the 1930s to 1960s and the culture which combined competition and training from the 1960s to the 1980s and the period of diversified activities from the 1980s to the present. Every culture period has its own specific features.

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Hannu Itkonen

How to Become the Guiding Star of a County? A Strife Over Local Mastery in Finnish Baseball

The activities of sports organizations is rooted in a more general system of locality. The leading figures in different sports compete over resources also. Sufficient base in population, economic resources, sports culture and the contribution of active members are factors on which a successful sports can be build. The rise of baseball in Kitee to national top is to be explained with these factors of success. The baseball people of Kitee had to win the competition against other baseball localities within the county of Northern Karelia. This battle for success was also battle over resources. Success presupposed regionalization which meant crossing local borders.