

## **The Cold War, the International sport psychology and the ISSP**

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*The aim of this article is to document the influence of the Cold War in the development of sport psychology. This period that lasted from 1946 to 1989 determined the international social and political reality following the World War II. Information for the article was gathered from personal oral and written interaction with major protagonists, as well as others that had experienced this period. Letters between the two first ISSP presidents, minutes and documents mainly from ISSP and FEPSAC were consulted. Articles, books and book chapters related to this topic were other sources for the article that discusses the influence of the Cold War in sports, the impact of this period in the development of sport psychology, the role of ISSP, and the situation determined by the end of the Cold War. Especially after the 1956 Olympics, sport victories were used as a propaganda tool, which led to the development of sport sciences, including sport psychology, in both sides of the Iron Curtin that divided the Socialist from the Capitalist parts of the World. The inception of the ISSP in 1965 had an important role in promoting scientific and applied SP and making important bridges between professionals from the two blocs. After what was believed to be the end of the Cold War, a decrease in the development of SP both in the socialist countries and USA was observed, followed by an improvement mainly in Europe and Asia.*

KEY WORDS: history of sport psychology, cold war, ISSP.

### **Introduction**

The development of sport Psychology is related to social movements that had impact on cultural and scientific changes. Marcel Mauss's concept of "total social fact" aimed at clarifying the social and individual development from the perspective of society resulting from the interaction of its hidden components. In his book "Essai sur le don" ["Essay on the gift"] (1923),

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he suggested that understanding a system of relations among every area of social life, such as religion, politics, economics, history, etc., would be essential to study any social object. Indeed, all social institutions are expressed in his concept of “total social fact”. The French sociologist Jacques Defrance (2006) took Mauss’s perspective, suggesting that modern sport is a consequence of economic, cultural and social phenomena that led it to develop according to specific components in a given space and time.

After the World War II, a new international situation emerged opposing two social and political perspectives that originated the so-called socialist and capitalist blocs led respectively by the Soviet Union and Allied war winners including the British Commonwealth and United States. This period in the International politics was designated the Cold War. Its beginning is generally associated to Winston Churchill’s speech in USA at the Westminster College, in Fulton, Missouri, in March 5, 1946. There, he introduced the expression “Iron Curtain”, which would have a tremendous impact in the International media and public opinion. It described the line that connected Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic and kept under the Soviet influence the states of Central and Eastern Europe (International Churchill Society, 2019).

In the following years, each bloc founded one defense military organization: the North Atlantic Organization Treaty (OTAN) in April, 4, 1949 joining Western Europe, and North American countries, and the Warsaw Pact, in May, 14, 1955, bringing together the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. The mutual fear of the other’s expansionist and dominating tendency originated a permanent latent suspicion and multiple indirect actions at international levels. On the other hand, strong political persecutions were carried on internally both in USSR by the Communist Party and its Government, and in USA during the McCarthyism period (1940’s-1950’s). This designation was inspired in the active role of the American Senator Joseph McCarthy who headed the Committee on Government Operations of the Senate and its permanent subcommittee on investigations from 1952 to 1954. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019).

The Cold War had an outstanding impact in the whole societies of both sides, from the arts, including cinema, to science and sports. These fields were social expressions of attitudes and stereotypes in what concerned capitalist and communist ideologies, and were also used for political propaganda of both regimes. For example, the Space competition between USA and USSR was a major aspect of the Cold War that attracted the World attention. It started with the first Soviet satellites in 1957, and had its most outstanding achievement in the American Mission Apollo 11 to the moon, and first men Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walking on that planet in July 20, 1969.

USSR was the first to explore sports as an important factor of the Cold War but USA soon perceived international sports participation, especially in what regarded Olympic results, as a political issue. Recently, a number of authors became interested in studying sports in the context of the Cold War (ex: Edelman & Young, 2019; Parks, 2017; Rider, 2016; Wagg & Andrews, 2007; Vonnard, Sbeti, & Quin, 2018). However, this perspective has not stimulated significant publications in what concerns sport psychology, specifically.

The purpose of this article is to trace the evolution of the world sport psychology, seen as a “total social fact” that reflects the impact of the international environment during the Cold War period. Books, book chapters, scientific articles, articles from newspapers and magazines, ISSP and FEP-SAC minutes and documents, personal letters, oral and written personal interactions with senior professionals that were active and participated in historical events during the Cold War period were the used sources.

### **The Cold War and sports**

The sports political power had already been clearly understood by the Nazi German regime when the Berlin Olympic Games were organized in 1936. After the 1952 Olympics, the soviet politicians also had a clear perception of the Olympic Games as an outstanding propaganda showcase for the supposed superiority of the socialist regime. The last Russian Olympic participation before the 1917 Socialist Revolution had been in 1912, in Stockholm, becoming the 16<sup>th</sup> in the ranking of 18 countries. The USA ranked first. From 1917 Soviet Revolution until the 1952 Olympics mass sport was developed in the Soviet Union. Away from the Olympics since 1912, Russia/USSR came to Helsinki in 1952 to become the second in the ranking with 71 medals. USA still ranked first with 76 medals. Four years later, in Melbourne, USSR was finally the first with 98 medals “versus” the 74 American medals that ranked second. The superiority of the USSR athletes would continue in the 1960 Olympics, in Rome.

During the 1960's-70's, the Soviet Government stimulated research in sport sciences, including sport psychology, aiming at preparing sport scientific and technical staff and at optimizing athletes' performance. The All-USSR Scientific Research Institute of Physical Culture (VNIIFK) that was created before the War had an important role in this project. A number of methods used to train cosmonauts was also applied to the athletes' training. Because of the important political impact of sports success, a number of

experts – including sport psychologists – that worked in the athletes’ preparation mainly after the 1970’s received the highest government awards. (Rodionov & Serpa, in print ; Ryba & Stambulova, 2016).

The use of sports as an instrument to affirm the superiority of international socialism over capitalism was widespread throughout the socialist Europe, with special emphasis in the main sports powers that were the USSR and East Germany (GDR). A major example of this situation was the only soccer match between West (FRG) and East Germany in the History of the 41 years of divided Germany that took place during the World Cup, in Hamburg, West Germany, on June 22, 1974. It was designated a “struggle between brothers” [“ein kampf zwischen brudern”]. Although FRG could be considered as the favorite team, the East German soccer had been demonstrating a good level with the Magdeburg’s victory in the European Clubs Cup and the National team bronze medal in the 1972 Olympics and gold in 1976. GDR won by 1-0, the East German politicians commemorated it as a great victory of Socialism over Capitalism, and Jurgen Sparwasser who scored the goal became an unfortunate hero.

*“Rumour had it I was richly rewarded for the goal, with a car, a house and a cash premium. But that is not true.”* (Thacker, 2018)

*“That goal has brought me more problems than benefits. (...) The internal contestation to the GDR regime was immense, but made by a silent majority. More than half of the population supported the FRG. Do you believe that after that goal I was whistled at the DDR stadiums?”* (Sparwasser, 2019 p. 24)

Because Sparwasser was used as a symbol of the socialist regime, he was prevented from accepting a very well paid invitation from Bayern Munich in order to demonstrate the lack of interest in money by a socialist citizen. Moreover, being a professor at the Pedagogic University of Magdeburg, he was not allowed to complete his PhD due to his refusal to coach Magdeburg soccer team that had strong political connections. Taking the opportunity of travelling with his wife to West Germany to participate in a friendly old players match, Sparwasser defected to FRG in 1988, one year before the Fall of Berlin Wall.

## **The Cold War and sport psychology**

The international sports success of USSR was also related to the use of new psychological methods aiming at optimizing the athletes’ performances. The applied methods involved cooperation between psychologists and phys-

iologists, following the long tradition of Russian studies relating physiology and psychology. According to Vanek & Cratty (1970), from 1939 through the 1960's the athletes' preparation models mostly focused on the regulation of pre-start tension that was believed to influence the athletes' psycho-physiological state during the performance, using methods based on the Schultz autogenic training, including mental imagery, as well as the volition training and moral development. Two names emerged as the main responsible for the development of Soviet sport psychology: Avkensly Puni, from Leningrad and Petr Roudik, from Moscow.

The VNIIFK where around 900 experts worked, including a strong group of psychologists, established in 1958 a specialized laboratory to study the psychological aspects of sport (Rodionov & Serpa, in print). A high number of publications in Russian was produced.

Scientific meetings enabled contacts among the soviet sport psychologists. Most probably, the first major event in this field was the 1st All-USSR Meeting on Psychology of Physical Culture and Sport that was held in Leningrad (currently St. Petersburg), in 1956. The second and third were held in 1958 and 1960 followed by eight more during the Soviet era (Ryba & Stambulova, 2016). At the I All-USSR meeting, the Head of Psychology and Pedagogy Department at the Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture, raised for the first time the topic related to the psychological training of the athlete regarded as a complex pedagogical process. This approach was related to the development of athletes' mental functions aiming at achieving success in a given sport (Davidov, 1993). Especially from the 1960s onwards, the Soviet approach emphasized the development of athletes' motivation/volition characteristics and the use of mental techniques in order to regulate the emotional states along the whole process, including coaching and competitive activities. The direct preparation aimed at the psychological regulation including the pre-competitive states and those during the various competitive moments. Teams forming and management, as well as the coach's psychological aspects would also be considered (Kantor & Ryzonkin, 1993).

The Cold War effect in sport psychology expanded to other socialist countries whose professionals had a close interaction with their Soviet colleagues. The strong support and official recognition of sport psychology in the Eastern European countries is connected to the inception of the first SP associations designated as Committees or Commissions. In "The World Sport Psychology Sourcebook", Salmela (1981) reports on 31 countries from the five Continents, and only USSR, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Japan are mentioned to have founded associations before 1965 when the International

Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP) was established. This fact suggests the step forward given by the Eastern Socialist countries in this field, as well as by Japan.

The first SP Commission was established in USSR, in 1948, as a Sport Psychology Commission included in the Methodological (lately, Scientific) Committee of Physical Culture and Sport under the Council of Ministers. In 1953, the Sport Psychology Committee of the Czechoslovakian Union of PE & Sport was created and in 1960 the SP Section of the Czech Psychological Association, which gave credibility in regard to the psychological community. Bulgaria was the third country to have a Committee of SP, which was included in the Bulgarian Union for Sport & Physical Culture (Morris, Hackfort & Lidor, 2003; Rodionov & Serpa, in print; Salmela, 1981; Vanek, 1994).

Vanek & Cratty (1970) highlight the importance given by socialist countries to the psychological preparation of superior athlete as a main working topic, such as Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary – with the main sport psychologists Ema Geron, Michail Epuran, and Arato, respectively. Moreover, the authors devote specific paragraphs to German Democratic Republic, Russia/USSR and Czechoslovakia.

GDR became one of the top three countries in the Olympic medals ranking. Leipzig was the main center of sport sciences and athletes' training, founded in 1950, where a laboratory of sport psychology was established at the Research Institute of Physical Culture. Paul Kunath became the prominent figure of sport psychology in GDR. Exchanges between the leading professors of the Russian and East German centers happened occasionally. On the other hand, during the preparation for the Mexico Olympics, sport psychologists were included in the technical staff of the GDR teams to the high altitude trainings in Bulgaria in 1966 and 1967, as well as in the Pre-Olympic training in Mexico City. Renate Mathesius and Sigmund Mueller, members of Kunath.'s staff, were selected for this mission. Their role was mostly supportive to the coaches in their interactions with the athletes rather than having a clinic direct contact with the athletes (Vanek & Cratty, 1970). Scientific publications expressed the research and applied findings of the GDR professionals (e.g., Kunath, 1963; Meinel, 1960; Mueller, 1961a,b).

In Czechoslovakia, the psychological support of athletes and consultancy to coaches, started in the 1950's in specific centers influenced by the Soviet approach. The Czechoslovakian Olympic team at Mexico-1968 was one of the two first among all countries to include a sport psychologist to work actively in the on-site adaptation process: Miroslav Vanek, from the Charles University. The other one was the Finish Olympic team with Friedrich Blanz (Vanek & Cratty, 1970; Lintunen, 2020).

Together with a team of sport psychologists composed of himself, Vaclav Hosek, Franticek Mann and Peter Knotek, Vanek worked in the athletes' altitude training previous to the Mexico Olympics, included in the scientific committee where the physicians and coaches also participated in a close working relationship. During the 1966 and 1967 preparation period, a complete profile of the athletes was produced including biographical data, personality and intelligence tests from general psychology, as well as sensory-motor tests. A specific study group was formed in order to test a special training regime and be submitted to psychological, motor and physiological evaluation. The collected information was used in the preparation of all the 124 members of the Olympic team in Mexico-1966 by the coaches, physicians and psychologist. Moreover, Vanek provided on-site clinical oriented individual and team support when needed, as it is thoroughly described in a specific chapter of "The psychology and the superior athlete" (Vanek & Cratty, 1970), which was a very rare report from a socialist scientist during the Cold War period.

Cuba shall be mentioned as well, considering the influence of USSR. On one hand, some Soviet professors and advisors gave courses and assisted programs to educate Cuban sport psychology experts recruited from physical educators. On the other hand, some Cuban physical educators were sent to complete masters and PhD courses in Socialist countries such as Osmel Martinez, in Bulgaria, the first PhD in SP in Latin America. Moreover, due to its geographical position, Cuba also could accede to American publications. An important mission of the Cuban specialists besides teaching in the Institute of Physical Culture, was assisting athletes at the Institute of Sports Medicine. A number of sport psychologists were included in the staff of the Cuban teams at Pan American, World and Olympic competitions, earning major Government awards (Ucha, 2009)

In USA, unlike the socialist countries, the physical education departments at the American educational system had a very low prestige in comparison with the other departments, especially due to the lack of scientific research. Notwithstanding, some scholars had started laboratorial research in the 1940's, both to avoid losing financial support, and to change the academic perception of their departments (Green & Benjamin Jr., 2009). Losing the first place in the Olympics medals ranking against Soviet Union was perceived as an important warning to change the quality of sports training (Stambulova, Wrisberg & Ryba, 2006). The American university scholars took this opportunity to prove the importance of physical education and sports through research aiming at generating better psychological foundations regarding motor learning and motor performance (Green & Benjamin

Jr., 2009). Yet, according to Vanek & Cratty (1970), psychology of the superior athlete was not the main focus of American researchers much more interested in physical education. Nevertheless, John Lawther (1951) published the reference book “Psychology of Coaching” although

*“In general, coaches in the United States might talk vaguely of psyching up their athletes, while making few attempts to obtain and use available findings in literature”* (Vanek & Cratty, 1970, p. 21).

The clinical psychologists from San Jose State College, in California, Thomas Tutko and Bruce Ogilvie were among the first ones to focus specifically on top athletes’ performance. Their book “Problem athletes and how to handle them” (Ogilvie and Tutko, 1966) based on that experience became classic (Vanek & Cratty, 1970). According to Roberts, the advancement of sport psychology in the USA was in the hands of pioneers like the psychologists Bruce Ogilvie, Thomas Tutko and Dean Ryan. For many years the American approach was clinic consultant based (Stambulova & col. 2006).

The western general lack of knowledge in what concerned the scientific psychological preparation to performance led to an interesting naïve perception of the sports community. Therefore, it was transferred to the Soviet sport psychologists’ role the popular American stereotype of a dehumanized Russian athlete scientifically produced as it is caricatured in the Soviet boxer Ivan Drago who opposes to Rocky Balboa in the movie Rocky IV. This was the case of the track & field American top level coach Herb Weinberg that, responded to Gregori Raiport’s article (1978) published in the New York Times, in an article published in the same newspaper. Raiport was a Soviet sport psychologist who had been a member of the Soviet Olympic staff in 1976 and defected to USA in 1977. He had worked at the VNIIFK with talents and top level athletes, and expressed the importance given by the Soviet sports organizations to the athletes’ psychological preparation. Further, Raiport would write the book “Red Gold” (Raiport, 1988) describing the peak performances techniques behind the Soviet and East German Olympic victories. He was surprised for noticing the American low level of awareness to this area *versus* the high scientific and applied level of Soviet sport psychology in the late 1970’s:

*When I left the Soviet Union a year ago, I was a sports psychologist, but when I tell that to people here they just’ look at me blankly”* (Raiport, 1978, p.2).

Therefore, Raiport anticipated the American defeat at the Moscow Olympics in 1980, where USA finally would not participate for political reasons related to the Cold War.

In his reaction to this article, Weinberg associated psychological preparation to manipulation, and expressed his deep rejection to this kind of preparation:

*There is fear the Russians will rout us in the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow. Maybe so. However, in developing the psyches of our athletes, we are winners. Sports psychology is best left to the Russians as a natural offshoot of their society psychology (...) To me, Soviet development of sports psychology is the epitome of this requirement, the loss of individuality. (Weinberg, 1978, p. 2).*

In 1984, Raiport became consultant for American athletes in Los Angeles. However, he kept contacts in USSR and in an interview related to the preparation to the Los Angeles Olympics given to the UPI sports writer Jeff Hasen, he declared that the Soviet officials believed that the Americans had adopted a special new mental training method that allowed their athletes to achieve results at the higher level in the World! The Soviets were worried to lose the next 1984 Olympic battle of the Cold War... Raiport also explained that when he worked in Moscow, the VNIIFK had an intelligence department aiming at gathering information about the western athletes (Hasen, 1984).

In Western Europe, psychology applied to sports performance was rare and dispersed, mostly associated to psychiatrists. An example was the psychiatrist Ferruccio Antonelli who worked with the Italian Olympic Committee. Antonelli performed the first ever psychological evaluation of Italian Olympic athletes included in the selection process for the Melbourne Olympics-1956, as it was done concerning the technical and medical aspects (Antonelli, 1995). Another example was the Finish psychologist Friedrich Blanz who at Mexico-1968 collected psychological data from the athletes and had applied interventions with them. Blanz was the first chair of the Finnish Society of Sport Psychology and a member of FEPSAC MC from 1983 to 1991, being active in sport psychology from the 1960's to his death in 1987 (Lintunen, 2020).

Japan had an early development. The reason may be due, on one hand, to the fact that the study of the psychological aspects of sport, mainly focused on physical education, started in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century with psychologists like Mitsuo Matsui and Hideo Egami (Nakagomi & Yamamoto, 2016). On the other hand, the preparation for the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games may also have motivated the development of this new field. The preparation of the Japanese athletes included a strong psychological work mostly focused in the anxiety control, which was carried by clinical psychologists (Nakagomi & Yamamoto, 2016). Probably related to this approach,

Japan would be connected to an important milestone for the development of sport psychology, considering that the Tokyo Pre-Olympic Congress included for the first time a session on sport psychology with three major pioneers: John E. Kane (Great Britain), Miroslav Vanek (Czechoslovakia), and Iwao Matsuda (Japan). According to Vanek, this was a sign that the sports community started recognizing SP (Vanek, 1994). Japan was also the first country to have a national organization of SP out of the Socialist countries. In 1961, the Psychology of Physical Education Division was established within the Japan Society of PE and Sport Sciences that had been created in 1950. It would become the independent Japanese Society of Sport Psychology in 1973, responding to a challenge of Ferruccio Antonelli, the founding President of the International Society of Sport Psychology (Nakagomi & Yamamoto, 2016).

Despite the international different scientific and applied level of sport psychology, the Cold War period was characterized by the general advancement of the field. It included the study of psychological aspects of sports performance, responding to the need of upgrading this front of the Cold War. This led Miroslav Vanek to write that the development of sport psychology

*“was paradoxically one of the small advantages of the Cold War”* (Vanek, 1994, p.22)

### **The Cold War and the International Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP)**

In 1963, in Barcelona, Spain, the 4<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Latin Group of Sports and Physical Medicine, under the International Federation of Sports Medicine, included for the first time a specific session on sport psychology. This session was a success and led to the idea of organizing a larger international congress shared by the psychiatrist Ferruccio Antonelli (Italy), the philosopher and pedagogue José Maria Cagigal (Spain) and the psychologist Michel Bouet (France) (Cruz, 1994).

In 20-24, April 1965, in Rome, the I International Congress of Sport Psychology\* became a success by the hand of Antonelli, the Congress Chair, and

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\*In fact, the first ever International congress of SP was organized by Pierre de Coubertin in 1913, in Lausanne, Switzerland: “I International Congress of Psychology and Physiology of Sport” aiming at to “to christen a new science, or to speak in more precise terms, a new branch of a science, by making it more widely known: sports psychology” (Coubertin, 1913a, pp. 19-20: The Olympic congresses. In N. Muller (Ed.), Pierre de Coubertain, 1863-1937 – *Olympism, selected writings* (pp. 451-452). Lausanne: IOC.

the Spanish psychiatrist Jose Ferrer-Hombravella, the Secretary General. There were 450 participants from 36 countries that made 216 presentations, including 46 representatives from the European socialist countries (Antonelli, 1966). One of the Soviet representatives was supposed to be Avksenty Puni. At the last moment, he was replaced by N.A. Khudadov considering that Puni had Italian antecessors and the political leaders admitted the possibility that he could be tempted to defect to the West (Rodionov & Serpa, in print).

Vanek and Cratty (1970) wrote that USA was represented by 50 physical educators curious about this field, which was a different situation compared to the experienced socialist psychologists participating there. According to Glyn Roberts (2020), the American group also included some psychologists. As a result of the American participation, the North American Society of Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity (NASPSPA) was established.

Rome was the first opportunity where people interested in sport psychology from both sides of the Iron Curtin met together. Antonelli was able to gather the most relevant names of sport psychology at the time, as it was the case of the Bulgarians Genov and Geron, the Czechoslovakian Vanek, the Romanian Epuran, the Soviets Khudadov and Roudik, the Spanish Cagigal, and the Americans Cratty, Ogilvie and Slater-Hammel (Ce, 2011).

The report of the round-table “Sport Psychology as a Branch of a Science”, (Antonelli, 1966) that was held during the Congress suggests the more advanced stage of socialist sport psychology towards sports achievement. The Czechoslovakian Miroslav Kodym and Ivan Macák were invited to present two papers, respectively “Consultation of Sport Psychology” and “Psychic efficiency and its indicators of the research method”, in order to introduce the topic based on their professional experience and expertise. It may be assumed that their presentations expressed the main Eastern European tendencies regarding the sport psychology approaches. After reading the reports, we may summarize as follows:

- General psychology provided a main theoretical basis to the work to be developed in sport psychology;
- The sports context as well as the psychological demands of sports practice and competition needed to be interpreted and approached in the applied work by specific models and tools;
- It was admitted that different sports would have different psychological characteristics and thus need specific types of psychological training;
- Research should be developed both to increase knowledge about the psychological aspects of sports in general and of specific sports, and to develop the knowledge on athletes’ psychological learning and perfor-

- mance processes. The psychological characteristics related to top performance should also be validated;
- Research should develop sport specific tests and evaluation methods;
  - Applied work should have the psychological examination and diagnosis as its starting moment in order to enable a thorough interpretation of the athlete's personal characteristics and established the correct training procedures;
  - A staff teamwork where the psychologists cooperated with the physicians and other specialists enabled the production of a psychological report to be delivered to the coach and managers for their use aiming at optimizing the training system;
  - The coach was a central actor of the training process who should train the athlete according to the data that was given to him. Therefore, the psychologist had also the task of educating the coaches on the psychological issues.

Afterwards, a discussion took place with the participation of the Eastern European Eugeniusz Geblewicz (Polonia), Miroslav Vanek (Czechoslovakia), Emma Geron (Bulgaria), Petr Roudik (USSR), and the western Alfred Hubbard (USA), Ferruccio Antonelli (Italia), Marcel Hebbelink (Belgium) Jose Maria Cagigal (Spain), Ferrer-Hombravella (Spain), and Ribeiro da Silva (Brazil). The socialist representatives showed clearer ideas, concepts and practices about the specific status, methods and tools of sport psychology mostly focused in top level sport. On the other hand, the representatives of the western countries still seemed searching for a purpose and a specific paradigm to give sport psychology a meaning in the interception of sport/physical education and general psychology.

During this event, on April 20, 1965, by 8.00 pm, at the Aula Magna of the Italian Olympic Committee, the International Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP) was born. The first Managing Council was nominated and approved by large majority with one opposing vote (Antonelli, 1966), following Ferrer-Hombravella's proposal. Both he and Antonelli had previously identified people active in the field and those names were proposed in the meeting to be representatives of language groups: English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Scandinavian, and Spanish. The Slavian countries were also represented by Vanek despite they didn't exist according to himself... (Vanek, 1994). However, Vanek's nomination for the MC involved a complex political procedure with the participation of a senior Czech colleague, a Soviet colleague and a Soviet Ambassador, because he was not a member of the Communist Party at that time (Morris, Hackfort & Lidor 2003). Finally, problems

were solved and Vanek was nominated to the MC. Antonelli became the President according to the proposal of Ferrer-Hombravella who became Secretary-General (Vanek, 1994). Alfred Morgan Olsen (Norway) and Arthur T. Slater-Hammel (USA) became Vice-Presidents, and the other members were Henri Pierre Périé (France), Josef Recla (Austria) and Athayde Ribeiro da Silva (Brazil). Paul Kunath, from DDR, was nominated as a representative of the East European countries. Johnson Warren (USA) was nominated Member-at-Large having in mind the following congress in Washington.

*There were no elections, no voting, no discussions. Everything was made ready with respect to the divided world. The statutes were only proclamative, the membership free (Vanek, 1994, p. 23).*

Although the composition of the ISSP Managing Council had tried to balance the political aspects, the tension between the two blocs was always present. It became close to a rupture situation after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 to stop the Prague Spring, which was a period of a progressive political openness following the elections in this country. A strong reaction of the Czechoslovakian people emerged in the streets that caught the sympathy and protest of the western world. Vanek, himself, followed the radio appeals for the people to ring the bells in all the many churches of Prague. He went to the highest tower of one of the main churches and rang the biggest bell there, which according to his perception contributed to the communist regime to consider him a non-reliable person. (Vanek, 1993, personal oral report).

A main goal in the inception of ISSP was the organization of periodic SP international congresses. The second event was scheduled to 1968 in Washington, USA. The congress would reflect the conflicting situation at that time and some ISSP members even suggested not to allow the USSR representatives to participate, as well as being members of the Society.

In his personal letter to Antonelli (c/c Sidonio Serpa and Robert Singer), from Prague, in April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1995, Miroslav Vanek recalled that Ferruccio Antonelli, the acting ISSP President, said in his Opening Speech:

*"I invite everybody (...) but I don't invite the persons who agree with the invasion to Czechoslovakia. They could not be regarded psychologists".*

In Antonelli's replying letter to Vanek (c/c Sidonio Serpa and Robert Singer) from Rome in May 16, 1995, he wrote:

*"For several years I was considered an enemy of Kremlin, almost a public danger for socialist people. They didn't forgive my official stand (in my capacity of ISSP President)*

*against the invasion to Czechoslovakia. They boycotted our 1968 Washington Congress (...) where no East-European sport psychologists participated."*

According to the version of the Soviet press, the Soviet sport psychologists refused further cooperation with ISSP that gave support to the "enemies of the proletariat World" (Rodionov & Serpa, in print). Additionally, some European Socialist professionals were not allowed by their Governments to travel to USA, as it was the case of the Bulgarian Ema Geron (Morris, Hackfort, & Lidor, 2003).

In Washington, the political conflict, together with the fact that English was the only official language (excluding French that used to be also an international language), led the Socialist representatives together with other European members to leave the congress. The idea of forming the European Federation of Sport Psychology (FEPSAC) had its origin in that occasion and for the following years ISSP was perceived as a capitalist organization *versus* FEPSAC, a socialist one (Vanek, 1994).

The Cold War continued to set the atmosphere at the next congress in Madrid, in 1973, chosen for being a relatively neutral site in the USSR-USA conflict. A behind-the-scenes movement to change the ISSP presidency led to the nomination of Miroslav Vanek. He was an experienced sport psychologist, as well as a polyglot and warm person, also devoted to poetry, who participated in the literature competition at the London Olympics where the Olympic art contest – that started 1912 – had its last edition. Vanek was well accepted by both eastern and western members.

In the above mentioned letter to Vanek (1995), Antonelli wrote:

*"Moreover I too was a victim of politics, even in a smaller dimension. In Italy, I lost my position of chief of the Department of Psychology of the Institute of Sport Medicine because the Italian Olympic Committee (CONI) has been a communist cell. In Madrid, I was not re-elected president because the socialist delegates decided to punish me. You were very honest and dear when you were able to approach me in a corridor of the Congress Palace, seemingly occasionally, the day before the voting, and to inform me that they were going to propose you as the new president. (...) In Madrid I could fight successfully for inviting people to help me and to vote for me. I was ready to do it if the opponent was another person. But the opponent was Vanek. I didn't do anything. You know it. I understood how much the charge of ISSP President could help you in your daily life, in your existence, in your future. I am glad to confess that I voted Vanek."*

However, this was not the only typical episode of the Cold War. The Bulgarian Ema Geron took advantage of the opportunity of being in Madrid for the congress and defected to Israel with the help of some western colleagues who secretly made the needed arrangements to put her in a car,

and conducted her to the airport where she boarded a plane to Israel (Cei & Serpa, 2017). Geron was a major figure of sport psychology in Bulgaria where she was Full Professor and Chair of SP at the National Sport Academy in Sofia, as well as a member of the Ergometry and Gerontology Bulgarian Academy of Science, President of the Bulgarian Society of Sport Psychology, and Vice-President of the Association of Bulgarian Psychologists. She was also a respected pioneer in this field at international level, having books on performance psychology published in the 1950's and 1960's, and was President of FEPSAC. Her husband who suffered from political problems in Bulgaria emigrated with her, but a number of years passed before their son was allowed by the Bulgarian authorities to join his parents. Moreover, her name and work were vanished in her country and she had to resign from FEPSAC Presidency. She deeply determined the development of Israeli sport psychology and received the citizenship of this country (Tenenbaum, Lidor, & Bar-Eli, 2011). The end of the Cold War made possible Geron's visit in 1996 to her former department at the National Sports Academy in Sofia that is now named "After Ema Geron".

Vanek's mission as the ISSP President was not easy due to language barriers, considering that the eastern representatives could not speak English, as well as to political constraints and disagreements. He tried to balance the two sides of the Iron Curtin.

*"President Vanek, having spent time with Bryant Cratty in the USA to work on a book that they co-authored, was a product in leadership style representing Eastern Europe as well as influenced by the American approach. He attempted to balance his leadership style accordingly to satisfy the political orientations and expectations of the members of the MC, especially those representing the East and the West"* (Serpa & Pons, 2015, p.362).

An additional difficulty to President Vanek was to get the indispensable support of the Czechoslovakian Union of Sport and Physical Education that depended from the Central Bureau of the Communist Party. He was not a political trusted person (Vanek, 1994).

Anyway, he assumed his ISSP Presidency as a mission and reached to overcome the strong crisis after the Washington political episode of the ISSP Congress boycott by the European socialist participants, due to his work and abilities to establish friendly relationships within that small professional community. Indeed, Vanek was able to make important bridges between the two blocs. For example, the close contacts and mutual understanding with the ISSP Secretary General and his right-hand Herman Rieder, the President of the Western German Association of Sport Psychology, deeply helped the international recognition of socialist sport psychologists by Rieder's efforts in

the translation of their texts to German. On the other hand, the friendship between Vanek and the Swiss Guido Schilling, the President of FEPSAC who substituted Ema Geron, enabled a respectful cooperation between the rivals ISSP and FEPSAC (Vanek, 1994).

The 4<sup>th</sup> ISSP World Congress in Prague, in 1977, can be remembered as a continuing episode of international sport psychology moving in the Cold War atmosphere. The Congress Chair was Miroslav Vanek who mentioned that it was

*“totally under the permanent survey of the state police”* (Vanek, 1994, p. 28)

In a personal meeting in his house, in Prague with the author of this article referring to the congress, Vanek (1993) shared that many Czech so-called participants were unknown either in the field of sport, or of psychology... Moreover, he also shared that despite living in Prague, he was given a suite in the congress hotel, but he never had important discussions there because he deeply suspected that the police had put hidden microphones in order to register his conversations. On the other hand, the first keynote speaker

*“was an obligatory nominated Marx-Leninist general psychologist.”* (Vanek, 1994, p.28)

The majority of keynoters from the socialist countries was another imposed condition, and Vanek tried to decrease their political impact by limiting their interventions to 10 minutes (Vanek, 1994).

The entry of new and young members, specially the Americans Dorothy Harris and Robert (Bob) Singer and the Canadian John Salmela, as well as the NASPSPA representative Glyn Roberts, used to democratic collective work, has given a new managing style to ISSP and contributed to developing a task-focused approach. The next ISSP congress in Ottawa, Canada, in 1981, was politically smooth and so were Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1985, where Bob Singer was elected president, and Singapore, in 1989. The diplomatic and high social skills of President Singer, as well as his humor combined with his organized and goal-focused character, strongly contributed to overcome the political constraints in the Managing Council that always included representatives of the socialist countries.

Meanwhile, ISSP contributed to the mutual knowledge of professionals from the enemy blocs, either in the managing council, or in promoting networks. Empathy and often friendship among colleagues from both sides developed, and opportunities were worked in order to make possible some mutual visits.

In 1968, the leading American scholar Bryant Cratty, from the UCLA, California, took the opportunity of Vanek’s travel to Mexico as the

psychologist of the Czechoslovakian Olympic team, and invited him to visit his University for a three-months working period. The result was the publication of the book “Psychology and the Superior Athlete” (Vanek & Cratty, 1970) that soon became the main reference in the field of sport performance psychology. Yet, this visit to USA would have a side effect in Vanek: he became aware of the American Society and university reality *versus* the socialist system. This led him to consider staying in the United States, which he did not due to possible reprisals over his wife and daughter that most probably would not be allowed to join him, as he shared with the author of this article (Vanek, 1993). Instead, when he missed the western freedom, he used to take his car to one hill from where he was able to contemplate the USA Embassy in Prague...

An example of the rare visits of Soviet sport psychologists to USA during the Cold War period was the one made by Nicolai Khudadov and Albert Rodionov in October 1974, to four American universities aiming at enhancing mutual understanding between the USA and the USSR. The Florida State University was included and Bob Singer organized this visit in cooperation with the Department of State (Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs) and the Russian Embassy. It involved interactions with students, faculty members and coaches, presentations, observation of laboratories, sightseeing and socializing (Serpa, 2019).

The East German Gerd Konzag, at that time the head of the Sport Psychology Department and Director of the College of Sport Sciences Martin Luther University, Halle-Wittenberg, spent a period in USA and Canada during March and April 1988. As part of the program, he visited the University of Florida at Gainesville, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in Chicago, and the University of Montreal (Roberts & Kimiecik, 1989). At that time Konzag was a member of the ISSP Managing Council and so were the colleagues that received him at those universities, respectively: Robert Singer (President), Glyn Roberts (Secretary General), and John Salmela (Vice-President).

During the Cold War, some rare scientific cooperation took place among professionals from both blocs, although in some cases it has determined reprisals from the Soviet regime. For example, Yuri Hanin, from Leningrad, who overcame the difficulties to learn English in USSR using BBC learning records and reaching a high British English level, cooperated with some American colleagues, namely Cratty and Spielberger. The book “The athlete in the sports team: social psychological guidelines for coaches and athletes” (Cratty & Hanin, 1980) is an example. In addition, the adaptation to Russian of Spielberger’s State-Trait Anxiety Inventory – STAI was a project developed with Spielberger that led to some international publications (Hanin, 1983; Hanin, 1986; Hanin, 1989).

## After the Cold War

Mikhail Gorbachev's rise to power in USSR in 1986 with his new policy expressed in Perestroika and Glasnost determined a world dramatic change. One major consequence was the falling down of the Berlin Wall in November 9, 1989. The world believed that the Cold War had ended.

Now, the political constraints to mutual visits of American and Soviet-Russian sport psychologists had disappeared. In June 1989, 28 American professionals visited USSR and GDR, and in the following November, 28 USSR representatives visited USA. Glyn Roberts (USA) and Natalia Stambulova (USSR) were included in those delegations and provided this author the following information regarding the perspective each one had from his/her side (Roberts & Stambulova, 2019).

In 1988, Glyn Roberts was contacted by the "People to People International (PTPI) Program" in the USA in order to organize a visit of sport psychologists to USSR. This is a program set up by President Eisenhower in 1956 to foster good relationships among the citizens of the Soviet Union and the USA. Twenty-eight people signed up, and the visit was done in the last two weeks of June 1989. Roberts could recall the following names: Bert Carron, Bob Brustad, Craig Hall, Dan Smith, David Feigley, Dick Magill, Diane Gill, Joan Salkin, Jodi Yambor, John Silva, Karen French, Len Zaichkowsky, Louis Choka, Murray Smith, Robin Vealey, Sue Ziegler, and Candice Zienteck.

In USSR, the visit was organized by the USSR Sports Committee. The American delegates stayed one week in Moscow and three days in Leningrad. The official program in Moscow included scientific meetings with joint panels for presentations and mainly for sharing information about who was who and what each delegate was doing at that time. For example, Roberts presented a talk on "Motivation in sport: the concept of personal investment" (Roberts, 1989). A cultural program was also part of the visit. For example, in Leningrad, the first day was dedicated to visit the historical Lesgaft State Institute of Physical Education and Sport, where Natalia Stambulova worked at the time, and in the second day, there was a visit to the Petrodvorec Park and Palace. In the third day, a city tour and a dinner with the Russian colleagues were offered.

The language barrier made communication and high quality discussions difficult. Moreover, it was still a time when translators were careful about what was conveyed. Yet, although the professional and cultural visits were normally in groups, it was possible for the American delegates to have private visits as well. Some Soviet psychologists invited American colleagues for

dinners in their flats both in Moscow and in Leningrad. We may assume that those private visits were possible due to the political trust upon the Soviet hosts. Glyn Roberts recalled the episode he lived when Bert Carron, Dick Magill and he were going back to the hotel. Suddenly, the Soviet colleague that accompanied them used some personal official red booklet to commandeer a bus and took them to the hotel in it!

In this trip, a stop-over was done in the German Democratic Republic before the main destination, as it is described by Roberts:

*“(...) as part of the total visit, I insisted to PTPI that we visit the Leipzig Olympic Centre in what was then East Germany. I organized that, and we did spend four days in Leipzig at the athletes’ facilities. We were the first ever Western group of scientists to visit the facility. And we met the “big guns” including Paul Kunath, Gert Konzag, and the minister for Sport. We had a seminar where we presented papers. Because we were so many, and we had many seminars during the visit, I had a rotation system of who talked when. We also visited Halle University for one day (...). There was a huge interest in each other (...). I remember telling the delegates in the bus as we arrived at the Olympic Training facilities and I saw who was meeting us. They have sent their big guns to meet us, they are taking this meeting very seriously!” (Roberts & Stambulova, 2019, June, 24).*

Like in Russia, some private visits to the German colleagues’ homes were possible making personal closer interactions possible and building rewarding friendships.

In what concerned to the results of the American visit to USSR, Roberts reported that:

*“Natalia states that for Russians, this visit was an eye-opener about American colleagues and American sport psychology. But in my mind, the real benefit was the people to people contacts and friendships that developed. From that visit, I met and built friendships with many German and Russian colleagues.” (Roberts & Stambulova, 2019, June, 24).*

In November 1989, twenty-eight people including two or three authorities from the USSR Sports Committee and two or three people called “sponsors” composed the delegation that visited USA. All the four heads of the delegation were from Moscow: Victor Plakhtienko, Albert Rodionov, Sergey Neverkovich, and Semen Slobunov. Other colleagues from Moscow were Alla Duka, Elena Romanina, Konstantin Stavitsky, and Alla Travina. From Leningrad, Gennady Gorbunov, Albert Krylov, and Natalia Stambulova were included. Bronislav Vyatkin, Grant Ovanesyan, Vladimir Sopov came from other cities. These are the names that Stambulova could remember.

The two weeks program in United States included (i) New York with one-day visit to the West Point Military Academy, (ii) Colorado Springs to visit the U.S. Olympic Training Center, (iii) Chicago, including Urbana

Champaign - Human Kinetics Publishing House and University of Illinois (Roberts's university) and finally (iv) Washington, DC. Joint symposia were held at Broadmore Hotel in Colorado Springs, and at the University of Illinois.

According to Stambulova, interactions and discussions were already better than during the American visit to USSR. There were two good size lectures delivered by Ron Smith from the American side, and Semen Slobunov from the Russian side, and panel discussions. The language barrier was still well noticeable. Several leading American sport psychologists took part, such as Bruce Ogilvie, Bob Nideffer and Dan Gould. Ron Smith and Hugo Armstrong advertised the Goodwill Games in Seattle to be held in July 1990, and the sport psychology conference within the Games' Ambassador Program. Indeed, in July 1990 about 15 Russian sport psychologists took part at that Conference.

In USA, the delegates were mainly altogether in the group for the events but it was also permitted at free time go on their own. As to the result of the visit, Stambulova reports:

*“One result was related to higher awareness and a bit better understanding of each other. Other, was a continuation of the dialogue in Seattle -1990. On the personal level, some Russians had become well motivated to study/improve English and to be involved internationally.”* (Roberts & Stambulova, 2019, June, 24).

The first major international scientific meeting of sport psychology after the debacle of communism was the 1991 FEPSAC European Congress in Cologne, in September. The Soviet Union would officially end in December of that year. During the FEPSAC General Assembly, the open conflict among different factions of the Russian representatives was expressed in a dramatic discussion regarding who and what association should represent the Russian sport psychology. A new professional power was trying to emerge against the old power. László Nádory, from Hungary, elected Vice-President for 1991-95 in his fifth term in the MC, was the only representative of Eastern Europe, despite the strong representation of these countries since the inception of FEPSAC (see FEPSAC website). In each following election until 2019, one representative from the former socialist countries was always elected, with the exceptions of 2003-07 and 2019-23 with two members. However, for 2019-23 the MC Member Anastasiya Khomutova, from Ukraine, was working at UK. Since 1995, none of these countries has been represented in executive positions.

The first ISSP World Congress in the new international political status was held in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1993. For the first time no socialist

representative was elected. Since ISSP was founded, 15 members from Czechoslovakia, GDR, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and USSR/Russia, as well as Cuba, had been MC members (see ISSP website). A combined situation of internal crisis in these countries and of reaction from the international eastern SP community against the former communist countries that had lost power at the international “fora” might have contributed to the absence of their representatives in the period 1993-2001. Only in 2001, Natalia Stambulova who represented Russia at that time was elected to the ISSP-MC. However, she moved to Sweden two months after being elected and from 2005 to 2017 she was affiliated to this country at the ISSP managing council. Meanwhile, other members originally from socialist countries who had moved to West were elected and were affiliated to their new countries. It was the case of Tatiana Ryba, originally from USSR/Latvia, then in Finland, and Artur Poczwadowski, originally from Poland, then in USA.

From 1965 to 1989, seven ISSP congresses were held: four in Europe, including one in Eastern Europe, two in North America, and one in Asia. Since then, none of the following seven took place in the former socialist countries despite the unsuccessful candidatures of Estonia (Tallinn) for 1997, and Russia (Ekaterinburg) for 2021.

As to the FEPSAC congresses from 1968 to 1991, three were held in socialist countries. Since then, among the following eight until 2019, only one European Congress was held in an Eastern country (Prague, Czechoslovakia, 1999).

In November 1993, the author of this article, newly elected for the ISSP Managing Council and Chair of the ISSP Lisbon congress held in June was invited to participate in one of the sessions of the FEPSAC Managing Council, in Zurich, Switzerland. There, he was invited to act as a liaison-person between FEPSAC and ISSP that had been rival societies until then. This invitation would be accepted by the ISSP Managing Council in its meeting of June 1994, in Guadalajara, Mexico (ISSP-MC, 1994).

With the end of the Cold War after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the debacle of USSR, sport psychology lost a decisive political constraint. On one hand, the Cold War had brought some difficulties to a smooth scientific and professional exchange between professionals from both sides of the Iron Curtin, but on the other hand, it had promoted the development of this discipline with the aim of contributing to the sports victories that were also symbolic expressions of political superiority. However, the investment in sport psychology as a tool to optimize sports performance also decreased in consequence of the social and economic crisis after this major social-political

change in the former socialist European countries. In USSR-Russia the VNI-IFK reduced the number of collaborators to 80 in 2009, and the sport psychology laboratory of this institute closed in 1989 (Rodionov & Serpa, in print). Energy and influence decreased in Russia, the country where psychological preparation and mental training had encountered earlier its scientific foundations, clearer concepts and objectives. For example, the milestone publication “Handbook of research in sport psychology” (Singer, Murphey & Tennant, 1993) that had the contribution of researchers from the five Continents, only included one chapter from former Socialist countries, by Elena Kantor and Juri Ryzonkin, from the Central Scientific Research Institute of Sports and Physical Culture, of Moscow. Only the third edition (Tenenbaum & Eklund, 2007) would include two chapters by Yuri Hanin and Natalia Stambulova (Stambulova in co-authorship with the German Dorothee Alfermann) two authors from former USSR who by that time had moved to Western Europe. However, the Russian financial recover in the 2000’s together with the organization of big sports events like the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, led to increase the support to sport sciences, including sport psychology that had already expanded to other topics related to the athlete-person development and wellbeing (Ryba & Stambulova, 2016).

The unification of Germany with the end of the German Democratic Republic led to the complete transformation of the Leipzig center for sports top performance, and leading sport psychologists lost their jobs. Sport psychologists from GDR, as well as from other former socialist countries, mostly from the former USSR, emigrated to Western Europe and USA, or changed their professional field. Some of them had important roles in the development of this field, both in the scientific and applied perspective, in their new countries.

In USA, sport psychology at the major research universities lost its importance as well, and according to Roberts

*“was demoted to the second rank of US universities in the 90’s”* (Roberts, 2019, p. 83)

Western Europe became the leading Continent with exciting new research and applied centers, mostly at the Universities that generated increased number of young competent professionals (Roberts, 2019). Some Psychology Departments at the Universities developed SP within the frame of the psychological theories. The European Master Program in Sport and Exercise Psychology, a consortium of European Universities funded by the Erasmus program, had an important role.

With the end of the Cold War, sport psychology became more global and

the exchange of knowledge expanded. A new generation of sport psychologists coming from the former socialist countries that have good language skills are emerging and establishing good communication with western colleagues, overcoming the enormous difficulty of previous generations from the Eastern Europe in learning English. In this trend, an important role has been performed by the European Network of Young Specialists in Sport Psychology (ENYSSP), the FEPSAC, and the Forum of Applied Sport Psychologists in Top Sport (FAST). A recent important achievement to bring the eastern sport psychology integrated in the international community is the 2020 Russian version of the Spanish Journal of Sport Psychology led by Alex Garcia-Mas, in cooperation with the Ural Federal University at Ekaterinburg, Russia, according to the initiative of the senior sport psychologist Valery Malkin, who passed away some months before the publication, and Liudmila Rogaleva. Moreover, the current issue of the IJSP includes an article on the former socialist countries by the Polish scholars Jan Blecharz and Joanna Basiaga-Pasternak.

## **Conclusion**

Current international sport psychology evolves by the interaction among researchers and practitioners from different geographic regions. This is possible due to the technological development that made scientific and personal communication smooth and easy, leading to research networks based on the permanent updating of the state-of-the-art. Science over politics is generally possible in current sport psychology. However, during the Cold War following the World War II that interaction was not easy even beyond the more difficult and slower communication means of that time. The international competitive atmosphere of struggle for power over the opposed political bloc expressed in most of the social and political fields led to the control of communication among experts from both blocs. Yet, the East-West political rivalry promoted sport sciences, including sport psychology, with the aim of enhancing sports performance and victories over the opponent political bloc in the major sport competitions used as political propaganda.

In the fifties, an interest on sport psychology had developed in Western European countries mainly among psychiatrists, while in the USA this field was almost unknown. The Eastern bloc led by USSR took the initiative of developing scientific and applied sport psychology aiming at enhancing sports performance and kept the leadership in this field until the end of the Cold War and disintegration of Soviet Union.

Communication constraints did not prevent the wish of sport psycholo-

gists on each side of the divided world to meet colleagues of the other side and learn about what they were doing. The establishment of the International Society of Sport Psychology in 1965 played an important role as a bridge between both sides of the Iron Curtin, leading to the development of friendship among colleagues and enabling visits from socialists sport psychologists to Western Europe and USA, and vice-versa. Mutual respect was a general attitude. As a consequence of ISSP, other Continental and national societies were established, personal and scientific networks started, and publications increased significantly.

Despite the easier communication and interaction between colleagues from the former two political blocs after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the decrease of Russian SP, economical problems and lack of English language skills, did not allow the West to learn about the strong scientific Russian SP. At the International organizations, the former socialist sport psychology lost representation. The American influence, as well as the European one that strongly emerged in the 1990's onwards with an outstanding quality, became dominants. The international scientific and professional sport psychology field will deeply benefit from recovering and integrating the knowledge and experience of former socialist SP. Moreover, the new political and cultural international developments in the first quarter of the 21th Century brought to the front stage the contribution of the Asia-Pacific region, specially the Chinese sport psychology that tend to integrate the western models and Chinese philosophic fundamentals and traditions. The world has expanded after the Cold War, and so did sport psychology.

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