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The article examines the role and importance of sport and the Olympic movement in the Islamic world. Olympism is the philosophy of life that dominates and unites into the integral whole the virtues of body, will and mind. Olympism, which connects sport with culture and education, seeks to

create a lifestyle based on joy which sport brings. Olympism is inextricably bound up with the world Olympic movement, preparation and holding of Olympic Games. The authors consider the development of the Olympic movement in Arab countries, as in the process of globalization of the international Olympic movement the system of development of physical culture and sports in the Arab world remains understudied.

Today, the Islamic world involves more than 120 countries, mostly in West, Central, South and South-East Asia and North Africa, 35 of which make up majority of the population and Islam is the main religion in 28 countries – Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Kuwait, Pakistan, etc. Islam is practised by more than 25% of the Earth's population.

The role and place of defined by law by Governments in most Arab countries defines legislatively the role and place of physical education. Physical education classes are compulsory in secondary schools (1–2 hours per week). Program-methodical foundations of physical education are based mainly on the achievements of developed countries (USA, England, France, Russia, etc.). The analysis of scientific and methodological literature showed that the main problems in the development of physical education in Arab countries are:

- 1) insufficient development of resource base;
- 2) shortage of skilled stuff;
- 3) lack of sports consciousness in masses, underestimation of educational role of sports.

Researchers conclude that the modern Arab world is characterized by the prevalence of European sports over national ones. According to a number of authors, sports such as football, volleyball, handball, athletics, boxing got widespread. From the national sports children outdoor games for youth, equestrian sport, camels racing still exist. A significant role in the development of culture in Islamic countries has got the

development of physical culture, which has grown to professional sports. After which the history of Olympism began.

Until 1992, many Arab countries did not send women to the Olympic Games, as physical education and sports were considered to be exclusively male activities. In 2000 for the first time female athletes in swimming and athletics competed for Bahrain, earlier athletes of Bahrain turned out in the Paralympic Games. In 2004 at the Olympic Games in Beijing it was possible to observe a female athlete from Afghanistan wearing hijab. In 2008, for the first time in Beijing, the UAE and Oman included female athletes in their national teams. Previously, the national teams of these States were strictly male. In 2012, Brunei, Qatar and Saudi Arabia expressed a desire to include representatives of the weaker sex in the team roster, as the IOC threatened the refusal to participate in the OG to countries that don't comply with the conditions of gender equality. At the Olympic Games it is increasingly possible to see athletes from Muslim countries. At the last Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro 2016 there were athletes from such countries as: UAE, Iran, Afghanistan, Qatar, Brunei and Saudi Arabia. They took part in tennis, boxing, weightlifting and other events. Since 1993, the Olympic Games for Women of Islam have been held in the East. They are held every 4 years in 18 events.

Having analyzed league tables and medal standings of the Olympic Games, the author concluded that participants from Islamic countries much more often compete at summer Olympic Games. The author also found that Arab countries could win more medals, as women perform well.

The Islamic Games are open for the representatives of Islamic countries. There are no organizational difficulties related to the pause for namaz.

Summing up, it can be concluded that sports in the Islamic world have always been and will continue to be at a decent level. The basis for the development of sports has already been provided in Islamic countries.

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