

Zeitschrift: Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Soziologie = Revue suisse de sociologie
= Swiss journal of sociology

Herausgeber: Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Soziologie

Band: 21 (1995)

Heft: 3

Artikel: Sportization processes : emergence, diffusion and globalization

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-814776>

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SPORTIZATION PROCESSES: EMERGENCE, DIFFUSION AND GLOBALIZATION*

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The sociological study of globalization processes is no easy matter. Several conceptual traps characterise the debates between and among the antagonistic claims of the various traditions that have sought to examine the development of different societies.¹ These include: first, the recourse to dichotomous thinking; second, the use of mono-causal logic and explanation; third, the tendency to view these processes as governed by *either* the intended *or* the unintended actions of groups of people; and fourth, the lack of an adequate account of gender power as it is represented and expressed in global processes. We need analyses more suited to grasping the multifaceted, multidirectional and complex sets of power balances that contour global flows. In this context I want to explain how aspects of figurational / process sociology can assist in the breakthrough in thinking that is demanded in studying these globalization processes (Elias, 1982; Mennell, 1994). In addition, I seek to extend and refine aspects of this approach, especially as it applies to an understanding of global sport development and how this relates to processes of state formation and functional democratization. The analysis presented here outlines, in preliminary form, a framework by which to understand global sport processes.

Figurational / Process Sociology and Globalization: General Observations

From a figurational / process-sociological perspective, globalization processes transcend the boundaries of nation states; these processes are not of recent origin – they involve an increasing intensification of global interconnectedness and are very long-term in nature; while they have not occurred evenly across all areas of the globe, the more recent history of these processes would suggest that the rate of change is gathering momentum and despite the “unevenness” of

* Adapted from “Sport, Identity Politics and Globalization: Diminishing Contrasts and Increasing Varieties” by Joseph Maguire, *Sociology of Sport Journal* (Vol. 11, No. 4), pp. 398–427. Copyright 1994 by Human Kinetics Publishers. Reprinted by permission.

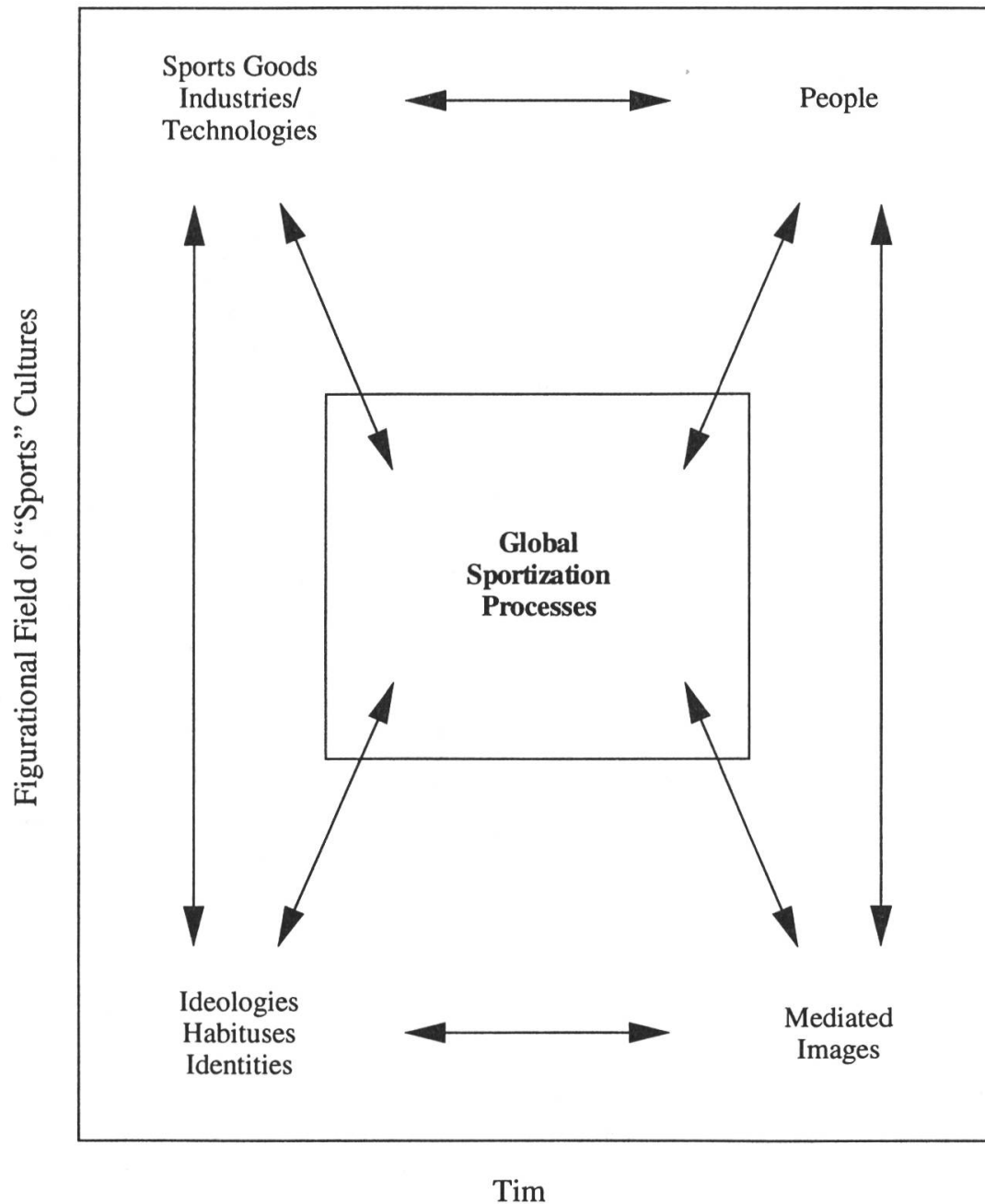
1 For greater discussion of the different approaches to the study of the development of societies see Jarvie & Maguire (1994).

these processes, it is more difficult to understand local or national experiences without reference to these global flows. The flow of leisure styles, customs and practices from one part of the world to another, "long-haul" tourism and global events, such as music festivals and the Olympic games, are examples of these processes at work. In addition, people's living conditions, beliefs, knowledge and actions are intertwined, to varying degrees, with unfolding globalization processes. Such processes include the emergence of a global economy, a transnational cosmopolitan culture and a range of international social movements. The control and regulation that officials of international sports organizations exercise over specific sports or sports movements is also illustrative of these processes at work. The establishment of a global sport legal process, based in Switzerland, separate from national courts, demonstrates this very well. Studies conducted within this perspective also identify a multitude of transnational or global economic and technological exchanges, communication networks and migratory patterns that characterize this interconnected world pattern (Mennell, 1994; Maguire, 1993a, 1994a; Maguire and Stead, *in press*). People, and nation states, are woven together in a tighter and deeper interdependency network. In Figure 1 key features of how this network relates to global sport flows are highlighted.

These globalization processes also appear to be leading people to experience spatial and temporal dimensions differently. Modern technologies enable some people, images, ideas and money to cross the globe with great rapidity. Finally, while these processes lead, as noted, to a greater degree of interdependence, and to an increased awareness of a sense of the world as a whole, we also see a concomitant resurgence of a different emphasis in the local / "other" nexus (Maguire, 1993b). These elements are two sides of the same coin. People become more attuned to the notion that their local lives, and national "place" of living, are part of a single social space – the globe. Yet they seemingly also wish to assert other aspects of what Elias has termed the I – We, balance, their "separate" and "distinct" personal and collective identity (1987/1991).

The representatives of cultures now communicate and compete with each other in a more interdependent manner than was previously the case. But this process is itself beginningless. For figurational / process-sociology, such very long term globalization trends involve broad, multi-faceted processes where no single causal factor predominates. These processes are, as noted, the result of a complex interweaving of intended and unintended sets of interdependencies. A set of shifting power balances of class, gender and ethnic allies and foes contour such global interchanges. Ideological practices by individuals, key state officials and the representatives of transnational corporations, organizations and capitalist classes figure strongly in this. The interweaving of individuals,

Figure 1
Global Sportization Flows



societies, international relations and humankind does not, however, follow any single inexorable path (Mennell, 1990). Many different variants to the existing global pattern were possible in the past, and the making of future global patterns is also open-ended and subject to different permutations. Understood in this light, then, globalization processes involve multi-directional movements of

people, practices, customs and ideas. Yet, although the globe can be understood as an interdependent whole, in different figurational fields, established (core) and outsider (peripheral) groups and nation states are constantly vying each other for dominant positions.

For figurational sociology, homogeneity, at least in any simple sense, is not a sufficient explanation of observed events. Processes of Europeanization, Orientalization, Africanization and Hispanicization have been and continue to be at work on a global stage. There are dangers, however, inherent in over-emphasizing the knowledge and power of more established groups and nations. Indigenous peoples from different cultures have a range of power and other resources available to them when "their" cultures communicate with and interact in various figurational fields of human interchange. Indeed, some cultures are so "outside" the global core that they remain either relatively unaffected or cannot interchange. Yet, even where more insider – or less outsider – cultures become the target of the conscious, and very powerful, attempts by representatives of transnational corporations and organizations to incorporate them into a global consumer marketplace, it is also important to account for issues of interpretation, resistance and "recycling". In the global flow of goods, services and culture, indigenous groups are active in interpreting what they receive. People – whatever the unequal power relations – are not blank sheets on which transnational corporations imprint their commodified tastes. Indeed, people do not have one fixed, unchanging identity (Elias, 1987/1991; Mennell, 1994).

In the multiple identities that compose a person's biography, involving class, gender and ethnic dimensions, a dynamic interweaving occurs between the local, national and transnational. A sense of place, of *heimat*, co-exist with visions of "other" places. This interchange is itself subject to change over the life of an individual, the *longue duree* of a "nation", and the expanding global fields. There is no *single* global flow; in the interweaving of global "scapes", "disjunctures" develop and cause a series of diverse, fluid and unpredictable global conditions and flows. Competing and distinctive cultures are thus involved in an infinitely varied, mutual contest of *sameness* and *difference* across different figurational fields. Rejecting the idea of some global cultural homogeneity does not, however, mean accepting the idea of some haphazard, unstructured growth in global cultural diversity.

Let me be clear about this. There is, undoubtedly, a political economy at work that contours aspects of global sport development. This political economy has been highlighted in previous research (Maguire, 1990, 1993b, 1994a). It is therefore crucial to probe the power dynamics at work in specific figurations. While people in different societies are not powerless dupes, equally they are

not “free” to choose as they please. Indeed, their taste for global goods is itself a reflection of wider societal power relations. By highlighting issues of difference and diversity, one acknowledges that challenges to specific flows do occur. This also allows for consideration of the role of counter flows and the emergence of new styles. Yet I am also aware that the personnel of “multi-nationals” market “difference” to “similar” segments of people on a global scale (Maguire, 1993b). It is not beyond our wit as social scientists to see how these processes are interrelated. We do not have to remain trapped in monocausal, unidirectional and reductionist thinking as writers such as Williams appear to be (Williams, 1994: 377–378). In highlighting issues of homogeneity, and the mutual contest of *sameness* and *difference* in global cultural flows, the analysis can be further developed with reference to the twin figurational / process sociology concepts of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties (Mennell, 1985; Maguire, 1993). This has several benefits.

These concepts arguably enable the analysis to steer a path between the excesses of aspects of the homogeneity thesis and the simplicities of the voluntarist assumption that individuals freely choose and cultures freely contribute, in equal measure, to global cultural diversity. These concepts also ensure that we place at the centre of the analysis an issue crucial in globalization research (Robertson, 1992) namely, a serious comparison of contemporary civilizations in the context of the debate surrounding nationalism, globalization and modernity. In a similar vein, Arnason perceptively notes, “among the identities that are thus reinforced and reoriented by the global context, civilizational complexes and traditions are not the least important” (1990, 224). The concepts of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties, overlooked in Robertson’s review, help in more adequately conceptualizing such an analysis and assist in making sense of the global diffusion, patterning and differential popularization of sports. Diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties have not, however, been given due prominence in previous figurational accounts on sport. This may explain, in part, some of the misunderstandings and misinterpretations that have arisen over the past three decades. No sociological approach remains static, and by highlighting these concepts, it becomes clear that greater common ground exists between figurational / process sociology and some other approaches than is perhaps realized or accepted. This is the conceptual framework within which I consider global sportization processes.

Sportization, Globalization and the Commingling of Global Sports Cultures

During the late 1980’s and early 1990’s I conducted several studies using a figurational perspective and examined processes at work in British sport. In

the case studies focusing on basketball and American football, this processual approach assisted in locating the specific changes identified on a wider canvas (Maguire, 1988; 1990). Both studies made reference to the concept of Americanization. It was argued then, and I would still do today, albeit with certain modifications, that this concept is fruitful. In these earlier papers several observations were made that expressed specific reservations and qualifications regarding the adequacy of the Americanization thesis. In particular, reference was made to the notion of interdependencies, and questions concerning knowledgeability and resistance and competing cultural flows were raised. Issues of power and the contested nature of the processes involved were also discussed.

It is true to say that these studies, whatever their shortcomings, did set out, as part of a broader figurational project, to examine aspects of the political economy of specific sport developments. Some observers have thus located these studies along with other (Marxist) political economists and suggest that they favour "the American imperialism thesis" (Harvey & Houle, 1994, 339). Indeed, Allen Guttmann refers to these studies as involving an "economic analysis of ludic diffusion" (Guttmann, 1994, 175). Given that other observers are predisposed to suggest that figurational sociology overlooks these dimensions (Jary & Horne, 1994), there is a certain irony in these assessments. I think the problem, however, is more a question of a failure to distinguish between different approaches and to tease out the distinctive perspective that figurational sociology has to offer.

To be fair, in certain respects my own position has moved on. While issues of Americanization were focused on, the analysis was conducted in a relational manner seeing this process as part of an interdependent network of competing global cultural flows (Maguire, 1993c, 223–227). Yet similar studies would now be conducted with a different emphasis. Greater attention is now paid to the link between the study of sport and globalization as part of a broader intra-civilizational analysis. Given this, but also certain misinterpretations of aspects of the work conducted within this perspective, it is perhaps appropriate to detail more fully the framework being proposed.

Figurational sociologists have, for some time, used the term *sportization* to describe aspects of the process of the emergence and initial intra-British state diffusion of modern sport.² Sportization and parliamentization, as they emerged in the 18th century, were characteristic of the same change in the power structure of England and in the social habitus of that class of people who emerged from

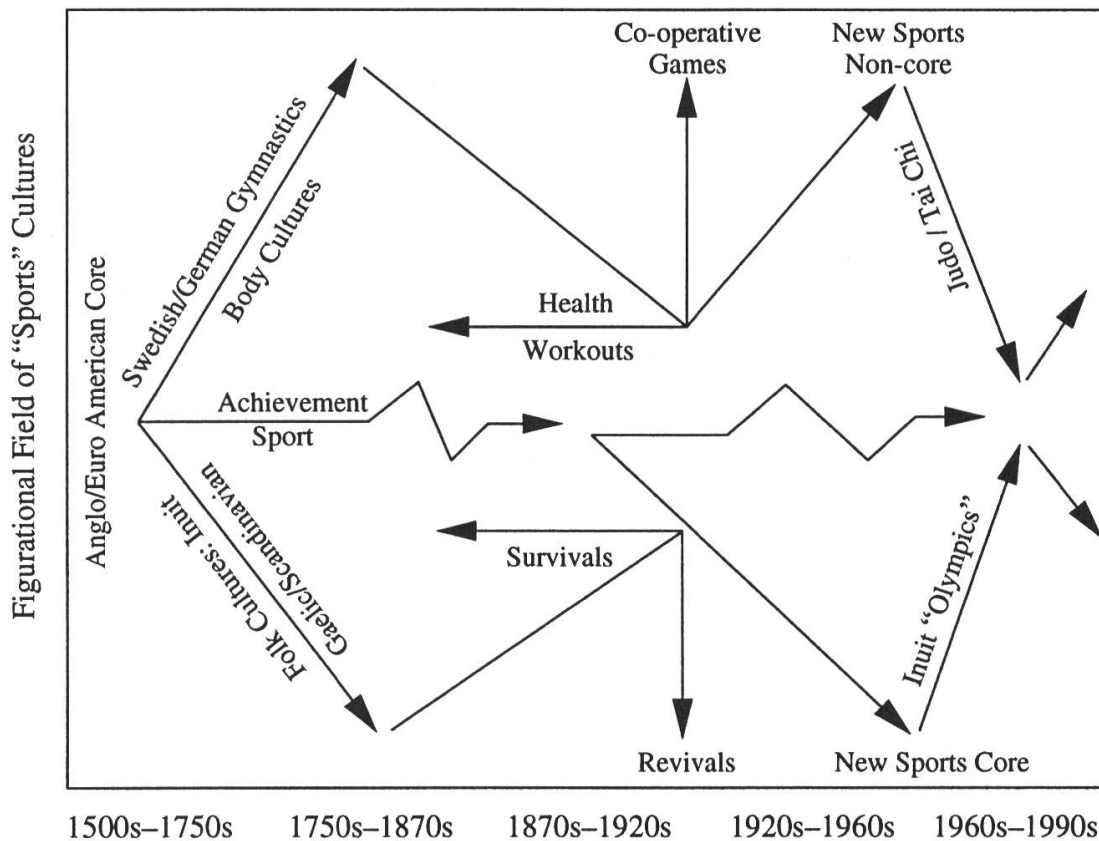
2 It is of course just as legitimate to examine interdependency chains in the "ancient world" and how "sport" forms diffused around the Greek, Roman and Islamic empires.

antecedent struggles as the ruling group. The initial sportization of pastimes occurred in two main phases: a 17th and 18th century phase in which the principal pastimes that began to emerge as modern sports were cricket, fox hunting, horse racing and boxing; and a second, 19th century phase in which soccer, rugby, tennis and track and field began to take on modern forms. More recently, Dunning (1992) argues that in the European case there are several principal requirements for such an analysis: (i) very long term structured processes are involved; (ii) there is a varying balance of centripetal and centrifugal forces involved in the developing chains of interdependence; (iii) there is a need to examine the changing balance of power between those groups and institutions that benefit and those that lose out at various stages in this process; and (iv) there is a need to avoid both natio-centrism and Euro-centrism and to view the emergent European sport figurations in the context of wider, and increasingly global network of interdependencies.

These observations have been complemented by other figurational work that also examines the European and international expansion of sports (Maguire, 1988, 1990, 1993a, 1994b; Stokvis, 1989; Van Bottenburg, 1992) and has gone some way to providing the empirical underpinning to more general statements about the phenomenon. For present purposes it is sufficient to note that the status competition between social groups within specific societies accounts for the differential popularization of sports within European nations. In some ways this complements the points made about the use of the twin figurational concepts of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties.

I want to extend this analysis by suggesting that a third sportization phase developed during the late 19th and early 20th century. This phase overlapped with a fourth phase that lasted from the 1920's through to the 1960's. In the third and fourth phases, sportization processes were powered by "Western" notions: struggles between the "Western" core and non-Western nations were evident even at this stage of imperial might. In addition, there were also struggles for ascendancy between the core nations themselves. More recently, beginning in the late 1960's, a fifth phase of sportization processes has begun to unfold (see Figure 2). Both the emergence and diffusion of these modern sporting forms on a global scale are closely connected to broader globalizing/civilizing processes. Let me explain why this is the case.

Figure 2
Preliminary Model of Diminishing Contrasts and Increasing Varieties in
Global Sportization Processes



Commenting on the diffusion of English pastimes to continental Europe and beyond, Elias addressed this connection between sportization and civilising processes. Noting the reigning in of violence, the development of a tighter, standardized set of rules, the development of governing bodies and the shift in body habitus, Elias observed that “the sportization of pastimes, if I may use this expression as shorthand for their transformation in English society into sports and the export of some of them on an almost global scale, is another example of a civilizing spurt” (Elias, 1986, 21–22). This sportization process did not merely involve the multi-layered flow of sports, personnel, technologies and landscapes – important though it is to explore the interconnected patterns these flows form. As Elias observes, studies of these sportization processes can also be understood “as contributions to knowledge of changes in the social habitus of people and of the societies they form with each other” (Elias, 1986, 23). More important than simply the global movement of cultural wares, this shift towards the competitive, regularised, rationalised and gendered bodily

exertions of achievement sport involved changes at the level of personality, body deportment and social interaction. A more rationalised male body habitus was evident that was going to effect people and groups in different societies in fairly fundamental ways.

Though Elias did not fully develop his analysis of the export of this sportization of pastimes, he did point to the significance of the relative autonomy of these sport forms for their adoption outside of England. Referring to organizational developments occurring in the nineteenth century, Elias noted:

Every variety of sport ... has a relative autonomy in relation not only to the individuals who play at a given time, but also to the society where it developed. That is the reason why some sports which first developed in England could be transferred to and adopted by other societies as their own. The recognition of this fact opens up a wide field for further investigation. Why, for instance, were some initially English varieties of sport such as Association Football and tennis taken up by many different societies all over the world while the spread of cricket was mainly confined to an exclusive circle of Commonwealth countries? Why did the rugby variety of football not spread as widely as the Association variety? Why did the USA, without abandoning the English varieties completely, develop its own variety of football?

(Elias, 1986, 39–40)

Questions of this type lie at the heart of an analysis of the links between sportization and globalization. Note that it is male achievement sport, emerging out of England, that is the dominant player. Though European rivals in the form of German and Swedish gymnastics existed, and some older folk pastimes survived, it was male achievement sport that was to affect people's body habitus on a global scale. Gradually, such achievement sports came "to serve as symbolic representations of competition between states" and "as a status symbol of nations" (Elias, 1986, 23). Considering achievement sport development during the 20th century, Elias went on to argue that:

The achievement sport culminating today in the Olympic Games provides telling examples. There the struggle for world records has given the development of sport a different direction. In the form of achievement sport the playful mimetic tensions of leisure sport become dominated and patterned by global tensions and rivalries between different states.

(Elias, 1986, 43–44)

What Elias did not fully appreciate and acknowledge however, is that while male achievement sport culture developed in and diffused out of an English

context, it was more fully developed in a later phase of sportization in the context of North America and, in particular, the USA. In England, achievement sport was shackled by the amateur ethos that emphasised "fair play" and downplayed seriousness.³ Yet, during the third sportization phase, along with the achievement sport body cultures, the notion of "le fair play" did diffuse to continental Europe and to both the formal and informal British Empire. While such a notion might have been viewed as a sign of distinction and a cultural marker of English gentlemen, sport advocates in other societies chose to practice their sports differently and more seriously. By the fourth sportization phase, it was an American version of the achievement sport ethos that had gained ascendancy.

The third sportization phase then entailed the differential diffusion of "English" sport forms. The remarks made by one historian, Ensor, highlight the British perception of this diffusion. In commenting on "the development of organised games" Ensor observed that "this, which on any reckoning may rank among England's leading contributions to world culture" (1936, 164). Whatever the merits of this evaluation, this diffusion was closely connected to two interrelated processes: the emergence of intense forms of nationalism and a spurt in globalization processes. During this period we see the intensification of "national" sentiment, the emergence of ethnic nation states, and the invention of traditions. This was to be the seedbed of what Elias noted was a feature of 20th century sport, namely the "self escalating pressure of inter-state competition in sport and its role as a status symbol of nations" (Elias, 1986, 23).

Reinforcing this position, Hobsbawm, quite rightly observed that "the last three decades of the nineteenth century marked a decisive transformation in the spread of the old, the invention of the new and the institutionalization of most sports on a national and even international stage" (Hobsbawm, 1983, 298). In this way, sport synthesised people's habituses with the ongoing invention of political and social traditions to provide the medium for and barometer of national identification and competitive community struggle. Although Hobsbawm is correct to point out that the "rise of sport provided new expressions of nationalism through the choice or invention of nationally specific sports", (1983, 300), e. g., Welsh rugby, it is also important to note that such nations were doing so in the context of the dominant standard setter, the English, and by means of "their" rationalised achievement sports. Equally, while Hobsbawm observes that "international contests served to underline the unity of nations or

3 I am grateful to Eric Dunning for this observation and indeed for his comments in general made during several personnel communications.

empires much in the way inter-regional contests did", (1983, 300) this formulation overlooks the connection between the sportization process, national habitus / identity formation and globalization.

During what Robertson, borrowing from W. W. Rostow, terms the "take-off" phase of globalization – 1870's to the mid-1920's – "the increasingly manifest globalizing tendencies of previous periods and places gave way to a single, inexorable form" (Robertson, 1992, 59). Viewed from the vantage point of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties, there is some room to doubt the unilinear and absolute nature of this statement. Nevertheless, several indices of this "take-off" phase can be identified: an increase in the number of international agencies; the growth of increasingly global forms of communication; the development of global competitions and prizes; and the development of standard notions of "rights", citizenship and humanity that are increasingly standardized internationally. It is suggested here that the third phase in sportization processes connects to this "take off" phase. Several aspects of sports development highlight these interconnections. The last quarter of the 19th century, for example, witnessed the emergence and spread of sport, the establishment of international sports organizations, the growth of competition between national teams, the world-wide acceptance of rules governing specific sport forms, and the establishment of global competitions such as the Olympic games. The 20th century establishment of world championships in many sports, is also indicative of the occurrence of globalization processes in the sports world. The exponents of rationalised achievement sport were spreading its tentacles across the globe.

Several important issues are raised by these interconnections. In this phase of sportization, "Westerners", and in particular the English, were the dominant "players". But they were not, as noted, alone: Danish and Swedish gymnastics, the German Turnverein movement and the spread of skiidraet from Norway to North America, and beyond, are all examples of the Europeanization phase in global sport development. Though the diffusion of sport personnel, forms, ideologies and images was not part of some global marketing ploy, at this stage it did reflect the prevailing balance of power in cultural interchange. Increasingly, however, North American sport personnel, forms, ideologies and images began to compete with and supersede their English equivalents. During the 1920's and 1930's, sports such as baseball, basketball, ice-hockey and volleyball diffused to those parts of the world more centrally linked to the "American" sphere of influence – Europe, South America and parts of the Asian Pacific rim. Again, to use Robertson's phrase, there has been a "struggle for hegemony" since the 1920's, but in sport this occurred not only between the "West" and the "rest", but also within the "West" itself.

While there were intended and unintended aspects to this process, the main long term effect was a reduction in the contrasts between global “sports” cultures. In addition, some of the more recent aspects of global sport development had their equivalents in the third and fourth sportization phases. For example, during earlier phases, attempts were made to establish transnational teams to compete against what was rapidly coming to be the most powerful sporting nation, the United States of America. This is evident in the attempts to form a British Empire team for the 1912 Stockholm Olympics. Given the concern here with identity politics, it is significant that, as Jobling notes, difficulties arose with regard to “the definition of a nation” (Jobling, 1986, 102). This attempt to form a transnational team parallels the efforts, in the fifth sportization phase, (since the 1960’s), to form “European” teams to play the USA in sports such as golf and tennis. During the 1991 Ryder Cup golf competition between the USA and Europe several American players took to wearing “Desert Storm” caps, embracing the flag and engendering a strong sense of “insider” American identity and establishing the Europeans as the “outsiders”.

More recently, European Union flags adorned the British venue of the 1993 Ryder Cup competition and the 1994 European track and field championships held in Helsinki. Yet, traditional sports bind people to those dominant invented traditions associated with “nation” / sport formation in the third sportization phase. Just as a British Empire team was not formed because of assertive colonial nationhood, the European Union’s own questionnaire regarding the entry of a common European team for future Olympic competitions was firmly rejected by community citizens. Indeed the national Olympic Committees of the twelve nations that then made up the European Union also rejected these overtures. Folk games survive and both regional and national identity politics are still a crucial part of European life (Nelson, Roberts, & Veit, 1992). In ultra-modern Switzerland, for example, “Ringen” and “Schwingen” – forms of wrestling done at the “Schwingfest” – and Wafflenlauf, a type of gruelling cross country run, survive and have recently been used by sections of Swiss society to reaffirm a specific tradition, habitus and identity.⁴ Attempts to form European sports teams are also indicative of the early stages in the emergence of a we-identity at a European level. Exponents of the use of sport appear to overlook, however, that, as Elias notes, in the habitus of a person “we could

4 This article is a version of a paper presented at the Inaugural Swiss Sociology of Sport Conference, Zurich, October 1994 that Hanspeter Stamm and Markus Lamprecht organised. While visiting Zurich I had the chance to discuss these folk pastimes with these two Swiss sociologists of sport. I am grateful for their invitation to attend the conference, their insights and also kind hospitality.

hardly find a more cogent example than the persistent way in which the national habitus of the European nation states impedes their closer political union" (Elias, 1987 / 1991, 210).

From the 1920's through to the late 1960's then, the "West" regulated the field of play, sport organizations, the surplus value associated with sporting festivals and the ideological meanings associated with such events. "Western" and non-Western people actively – as opposed to passively – embraced some aspects of the sports that diffused out of the Anglo / Euro-American core. Galtung is right to assert that sport was and is a "carrier of deep culture and structure" (1982, 136) and in the fourth phase this culture was "Western" in orientation. Indeed, sport can be said to have become a "global idiom" in this phase. Globalizing sport entailed a specific type of "Western" masculine culture as embodied in achievement sport.

More recently, Galtung correctly argued that sport is "one of the most powerful transfer mechanisms for culture and structure ever known to humankind", but in suggesting this he overstates the extent to which "Western" domination of global "sport" cultures was and is complete (1991, 150). As Said noted "it was the case nearly everywhere in the non-European world that the coming of the white man brought forth some sort of resistance" (1993, xii). On occasions, non-Western people not only resisted and reinterpreted "Western" masculine sport personnel, forms, models and marketing, they also maintained, fostered and promoted, on a global scale, their indigenous recreational pursuits.

While Galtung may be correct to suggest that competitive sports carry a "message of western social cosmology" (Galtung, 1982, 137), this does not mean that people from non-occidental or indeed occidental cultures accepted them uncritically between the 1920's and the late 1960's. Studies of Trobriand cricket (Cashman, 1988), baseball in Japan (Snyder & Spreitzer, 1986), the diffusion of sport to Papua New Guinea (Seward, 1986) and the early 20th century development of "Finnish baseball" (Meinander, 1992) all highlight the dynamic interchange between the local, national and the global. There is nothing sanguine about reaching this conclusion. What one is attempting to do is to describe and analyse how things really are.

Indeed, indigenous cultures have proved adept at embracing a sport form, reinventing it and then recycling it back to the country of origin. Ironically, American football is a prime example of this (Maguire, 1990). In turn, the core country also embraces cultural flows from outsider states and the "reinvented" sport form diffuses further around the core. The diffusion of Canadian ice-hockey illustrates the processes involved (Maguire, in press). It should also be observed that this phase of sportization / globalization witnessed

the slow decline of modern sport's founding nation. In the emerging global sport figuration, *Englishmen* were being beaten – in the early stages of this fourth phase, by fellow occidentals – at games that they felt they had, by birthright, a “god given” right to be winners.

Whereas the fourth phase of sportization clearly involved an elaborate political economy in which hegemonic control of sport lay with the “West”, control was never complete. Resistance took a variety of forms such as the cold war rivalry that was also played out in the sports world. There also occurred the slow assertion of women's rights and the challenge to hegemonic masculinity. The latter stages of this fourth phase were also characterized by the rise of non-Western nations to sporting prominence and, sometimes, pre-eminence. Non-Western nations began to beat their former colonial masters, especially the English. This process has intensified in the fifth phase of sportization beginning in the late 1960's, and is apparent in a range of sports including badminton, cricket, soccer, table tennis and track and field. Here, African, Asian and South American nations were and are increasingly to the fore. In a sense, however, they still do so on “Western” terms, for they do so through “Western” sports.

Anglo / Euro-American control of global sport has also begun to wane off the playing field. The control of international sport organizations and the Olympic movement is beginning, although slowly and unevenly, to slip out of the exclusive hands of the “West”. These trends are being reinforced by the accelerating commingling process occurring between sport cultures. Eastern martial arts as well a range of “folk games” have and continue to diffuse into and around the “Western” core. The media sport production complex markets “sameness” – especially in the form of American sports – and the global political economy that regulates global flows ensures that the “local” does not freely choose which cultural products are consumed (Maguire, 1990, 1993b). Yet, this should not lead the analysis to overlook the point that global marketing strategies also celebrate difference (Hall, 1991a). That is, the cultural industries constantly seek out new varieties of ethnic wares. These ethnic wares are targeted at specific “niches” within a local culture. Difference may be targeted to similar sections of a global audience, but at least in this way alternatives “survive”. The spread of Japanese Sumo to Britain is an example of this. There is also reason to suggest that national cultures and identities most affected by these processes appear to be those at the “centre”, not the “periphery” of the global system. Globalization processes are also unevenly distributed within central regions.

Just as in music (Hall, 1992, 38–39), food (Mennell, 1985) and cultural processes more generally (Nederveen Pieterse, 1994), so too in sport: this fifth phase of global sportization involves the creolization of sports cultures. In this connection, Houlihan is correct to point to the need to develop criteria by which to judge the “reach” and “response” of global flows on local cultures. He is also correct to observe that it is important to assess whether these processes effect what he terms the “core” or the “ephemeral” aspects of that culture (Houlihan, 1994). Similar observations have been made with regard to assessing the impact of Americanization processes (Maguire, 1990, 216). Equally, while he is correct to point to need to “distinguish between the globalization of particular sports and the globalization of the organizational processes and values of modern sport” (Houlihan, 1994, 367), it is important not to lose sight of the interconnections between the achievement sport ethos and how it is played out in different kinds of sports. Not all modern sports are the same. Further while I would concur with Houlihan that it is foolish to claim that victory on the playing field can, in itself, be seen as having a dramatic effect on relations between nations, I would also agree with him that “profound differences will nonetheless still divide states and that these differences might be reflected in the sports they play” (Houlihan, 1994, 364). Perhaps one can go further and argue that only when new “sports” gain cultural ascendancy in countries like Australia (attracting people from ethnic groups who have not traditionally represented Australia), and along with these new sports, the creation of new global rivals, will sport assist in the development of a new Australian identity and the jettisoning of older “invented” traditions (Maguire, 1993a).

When national identity – and the sport forms of the culture as a whole – are undergoing a pluralization process, it is also increasingly difficult to sustain the notion that a *single* sport represents *the nation*. The global movement of sport labour reinforces the problems of multiculturalism and polyethnicity (Maguire, 1994a; Maguire & Stead, in press). Migration movements of this kind can also engender absentee patriotism. With these trends in mind, perhaps it is less surprising that Western sport personnel and administrators may be experiencing aspects of the self-doubt and uncertainty that Robertson detects in “Western” nations in general in the most recent globalization phase. These sport processes may parallel what Hall, concerning culture more generally, has termed the “decentring of the west” (Hall, 1991a; 1991b).

While the contrasts between cultures may have diminished, there has also been an increase in the layers or varieties of habitus / identity available. In more complex societies habitus / identity has many layers and “depends on the number of interlocking planes in society” (Elias, 1987/1991, 183). While it is, as noted, increasingly difficult to sustain the notion that a single sport represents

the nation, sports in general bind people to nation-based we-identities. Yet, the involvement of Swedes, Spaniards, Italians and Germans in both the European men's Ryder Cup and European women's Solheim Cup golf competitions also illustrates growing sport culture diversity.

We are, however, dealing with a very complex and conflicting process. In numerous international sport contests we see players competing for nations other than those they were born in. Ancestral links and assimilation issues increasingly figure prominently in recruitment and selection decisions, and highlight more general issues underpinning sports labour migration. In the wake of globalization processes, a degree of pluralization has developed. This is hardly surprising if one bears in mind the idea of a commingling of cultures. These commingling processes involve the movement of people as well as of styles, images, commodities and consumer identities. As these processes gather momentum new power balances are emerging and new identities may be being forged.

Conclusion

Examining the growing seriousness of sport, Eric Dunning observed that three interrelated processes appear particularly significant. These are state-formation, functional democratization and the spread of sport through the widening network of international interdependencies (Dunning, 1986, 213). Dunning went on to conclude that "it remains necessary to spell out precisely what the connections were between, on the one hand, the growing seriousness of sports participation and, on the other, state-formation, functional democratization and the civilising process. It also remains to show how this trend was connected with the international spread of sport" (Dunning, 1986, 214). This has been the task that this paper has addressed.

By avoiding dichotomous, mono-causal thinking and adopting multi-causal analyses, the unintended basis of intended social actions that characterise global cultural commingling can be studied. Concepts such as diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties help in the task of substantively examining connections between the growing seriousness of sport, its global diffusion in the form of achievement sport and processes of state formation and functional democratization. I have also sought to refine and extend the sportization schema that Elias and Dunning initially developed. Several phases of sportization processes have been identified. Emphasis has also been placed on how the speed, scale and volume of sports development is interwoven with the broader

global flow of people, technology, finance, images and ideologies. Equally, the role of advocates of physical education, coach education and the sports sciences should not be overlooked in this development of a culture reinforcing global achievement sport. The close link between sportization, identity politics and national habitus also needs examination. A complex, contested, inter-dependent, yet also intentionless, set of processes characterize global sport. In tackling the phenomenon in this way researchers may find something more significant than a narrow natio-centric vision of the sociology of sport.

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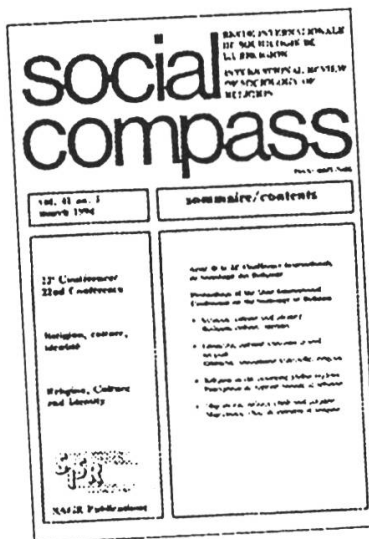
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