

Traditional Sports and Games in the Contemporary World

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The New Face of Sport?

By

Bartosz Prabucki

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I dedicate this book:

To my beloved wife for her patience, understanding, great love and help in every moment of preparing this work, and in life.

To my parents and parents-in-law for their unconditional love and extraordinary support in preparing this book. Without them, its creation would have been more difficult, if not impossible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	xi
Acknowledgements	xiii
Introduction	1
Chapter I	30
The Richness of Basque Traditional Sports	
Who Are the Basques?.....	30
Traditional Sports and Their Cultural Significance for the Basques....	32
<i>La Pelota Vasca</i> (Basque Pelota or Basque Ball)	33
A Brief History of Basque Pelota.....	34
The Selected Modalities of Basque Pelota	38
The General Significance of Basque Pelota in the Past and Today...	47
The Social Meaning of Betting During Basque Pelota Matches	50
Pelota and the Basque “National Traits”	53
Basque Pelota and Gender Issues	57
Basque Pelota and the Arts.....	63
Pelota and Religion	69
Basque Pelota as an Element of a Ludic Feast (Fiesta) -	
<i>Aste Nagusia</i>	75
The Process of Basque Pelota’s “Internationalization”	80
The “Sportification” of Basque Pelota.....	82
Pelota and the Media	83
The Future of Basque Pelota—Opportunities and Threats.....	84
The Other Traditional Basque Sports	87
<i>Herri Kirolak</i> —Basque Rural Sports.....	88
The Contemporary <i>Herri Kirolak</i> —Its Relationships with Betting	
and Gender Issues	93
“Folklorization” and “Sportification” of Basque Rural Sports.....	95
<i>Korrika</i> —a Special Race in the Basque Country.....	98
The Other, Basque Traditional Sports	100
What about the Basques in the French Part of the Basque Country?.	101
Conclusions.....	102

Chapter II.....	104
Scottish Traditional Sports and Games	
Who Are the Scots?	104
Sport as an Element of Scottish Cultural Identity	106
Highland Games and Gatherings and Scottish Traditional Sports ..	107
A Brief History of Highland Games and Gatherings.....	107
The Contemporary Highland Games and Gatherings.....	113
The Course of the Contemporary Highland Games and Their	
Most Important, <i>Traditional</i> Elements.....	115
Bagpipes and Bagpipe Bands.....	115
Scottish Kilt, Its Role at the Highland Games and	
Gatherings	117
Scottish Dances	118
Scottish Traditional Sports.....	120
Strength Sports	120
Scottish Wrestling	127
Running and Cycling.....	131
Tug-of-war	134
“Modernizing” the Scottish Games—an Opportunity for Their	
Development or a Threat to Their <i>Traditional</i> Dimension?	136
Various Dimensions of “the Contemporary Highland Games”	153
The Contemporary Highland Games and European (World)	
Cultural Heritage.....	158
The Other Traditional Scottish Sports.....	162
Shinty	163
Golf and Curling	167
Conclusions.....	171
 Chapter III	 173
Denmark—A Fascinating Example of Preserving Traditional Forms	
of Physical Culture	
Introduction.....	173
Between Sport, Education and Cultural Identity—the Phenomenon	
of Danish Physical Culture.....	174
TSG in Denmark—a Unique Phenomenon of European Physical	
Culture.....	176
TSG—but “Danish” or “in Denmark?”	176
From Farmer’s Culture to “New Games Movement”—a Brief	
Outline of the History of <i>Sports Culture</i> in Denmark.....	177
The Development of TSG in Denmark—from Initial Research	
to the Current State	182

Gerlev Sports Academy and Play Park—Unique Initiatives for the Revitalization and Development of TSG in Denmark.....	187
The Creation of Play Park (<i>Legepark</i>) in Gerlev	195
TSG in Legepark.....	203
Games from Denmark	203
Sliding table (Danish Name: <i>Shuifafel</i>)	203
Viking’s Fire (Danish Name: <i>Balders Bal</i>)	205
Bucket (or Chimney)	206
Locomotion games	207
Bull in the Red Sea	207
Stanto.....	209
Blink Your Eye (or Playing Tricks).....	210
Dexterity, Throwing and Bowling Games.....	211
Bird of Passage	211
Half Bowl	212
Hammer Game.....	213
Frog in the Hole.....	214
Group Classes and Activities in Play Park and in Sports Academy in Gerlev with Traditional Sports, Games and Plays.....	216
Training for Social Workers in Gerlev	218
The Course of the Training.....	219
The Significance of Practical Courses at the Sports Academy and Legepark in Gerlev	225
The Selected Initiatives, Implemented by the Sports Academy outside Gerlev	230
The Cooperation of Gerlev Sports Academy with Schools and the Other Institutions in Denmark.....	230
The Cooperation of Sports Academy with Primary Schools. Interesting Example of Classes for Children in Slagelse	231
The Meaning of Such Classes with Traditional Games.....	236
The Cooperation of the Sports Academy with the Other Institutions and Initiatives in Denmark	237
TSG Cross Denmark’s Borders—Cooperation with Tanzania	240
Conclusions.....	252
Conclusions	254
The Values and Practical Usability of Traditional Sports and Games	
The Need for Research and Interest in TSG	254
The Level of Vitality and Diversity of TSG in the World	255
Traditional Sports in the World “between Globalization and Cultural Identity”	260

TSG in the Current Reality “between Tradition and Modernity”	262
European Initiatives with TSG.....	264
The Significance and Practical Applications of TSG.....	266
Traditional Sports and Tourism.....	267
What Traditional Sports Can Teach Our Children and Us?	
The Role of TSG in Education	269
Traditional Sports and Health.....	274
Epilogue.....	280
The Prospects for Further Development of TSG Today and in the Future	
Annex	299
Additional Traditional Sports and Games	
Bibliography.....	343
Index of Traditional Sports and Games.....	355

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1-1 Chistera (racket) and other equipment for various modalities of Basque pelota.....	36
Fig. 1-2 <i>Pelota a mano</i>	39
Fig. 1-3 Author of this book playing <i>cesta punta</i>	42
Fig. 1-4 Workshops on Basque pelota, <i>Aste Nagusia</i> , Bilbao 2013	78
Fig. 1-5 Basque rural sport— <i>Aizkolariak</i> , <i>Aste Nagusia</i> 2013	90
Fig. 1-6 <i>Harri jasotzea</i> —stone lifting, <i>Aste Nagusia</i> 2013	91
Fig. 1-7 Women, competing in Basque rural sport— <i>tronza</i> , <i>Aste Nagusia</i> 2013	95
Fig. 2-1 Hammer throw, Highland Games, St. Andrews 2014.....	122
Fig. 2-2 and 2-3 Phases of tossing the caber, Highland Games, Bridge of Allan 2014	124
Fig. 2-4 and 2-5 Phases of weight throwing, Highland Games, Bridge of Allan 2014	126
Fig. 2-6 Backhold, Highland Games, Bridge of Allan 2014.....	129
Fig. 2-7 Girls, competing in Backhold, Highland Games, Bridge of Allan 2014	130
Fig. 2-8 “Open race,” Highland Games, St. Andrews 2014	133
Fig. 2-9 Tug-of-war, Highland Games, St. Andrews 2014.....	136
Fig. 3-1 Bull in the Red Sea, Danish activities for children, I European Week of Sport, Brussels 2015.....	208
Fig. 3-2 Stanto (in Greece: lices), activities for young adults, Vicenza, 2019	210
Fig. 3-3 Hammer game, Legepark, Gerlev, 2012	214
Fig. 3-4 The author playing <i>la rana</i> , World Sport for All Games, Lithuania 2012	215
Fig. 3-5 A play “O-la-o-la,” practical classes for social workers, Gerlev 2012	221
Fig. 3-6 “Pushing fight,” practical classes for social workers, Gerlev 2012	223
Fig. 3-7 Warming-up activities, classes for children, Slagelse 2012.....	232
Fig. 3-8 “Blind-man’s buff,” classes for children, Slagelse 2012.....	233
Fig. 6-1 Boccia, <i>Garden of Plays and Games</i> , Museum of the First Piasts, 2018	301
Fig. 6-2 Boccia—a great game for families and children	301

Fig. 6-3 Boccia is also a very good game for people with disabilities, Poznań, Poland 2019.....	302
Fig. 6-4 Bull in the Red Sea—“the bull” is about to “attack”	303
Fig. 6-5 The Chapel—a funny game for families, Museum of the First Piasts, Poland 2018	307
Fig. 6-6 The Chapel—a player (left) is rolling the ball, “Kapelamaster” (right) is ready to “defend the chapel”	307
Fig. 6-7 The Chapel—activities for children, Warsaw 2012	308
Fig. 6-8 Croquet, <i>Garden of Plays and Games</i> , Poland 2018.....	310
Fig. 6-9 Croquet is also an interesting and engaging game for adults, Poland 2017	310
Fig. 6-10 Kubb—an engaging game for families, Festival of Traditional Games, Poland 2018	313
Fig. 6-11 Kubb for children, practical classes, Poland 2018	314
Fig. 6-12 Netringball, World Sport for All Games, Lithuania 2012.....	316
Fig. 6-13 Netringball, I European Sport for All Games, the Netherlands 2018	318
Fig. 6-14 Netringball, classes for pupils at primary school, Czempień, Poland 2018	319
Fig. 6-15 Netringball, Festival of Traditional Games, Poland 2018.....	320
Fig. 6-16 Netringball, I European Week of Sport, Brussels 2015	321
Fig. 6-17 Polish Ringo, I European Week of Sport, Brussels 2015.....	328
Fig. 6-18 Polish Ringo, I European Sport for All Games, the Netherlands 2018	329
Fig. 6-19 Pandolo (similar to sztekiel)—Bartosz Prabucki before playing	332
Fig. 6-20 Pandolo, preparation to toss the stick.....	332
Fig. 6-21 Pandolo, the stick is in the air!	333
Fig. 6-22 Tamburello, World Sport for All Games, Lithuania 2012	335
Fig. 6-23 Tug-of-war, practical activities for children, Promno, Poland 2018	337
Fig. 6-24 Tug-of-war, Festival of Traditional Games, Poland 2018.....	337
Fig. 6-25 Tug-of-war—even the youngest can try!	338
Fig. 6-26 Tug-of-war for adults, I European Sport for All Games, the Netherlands 2018	338
Fig. 6-27 Wołany (stanto, lices). A person in the middle tosses the ball and shouts the name of a chosen player	340
Fig. 6-28 Wołany. The ball is in the air, the game begins!	341
Fig. 6-29 Wołany. The ball is caught. Everyone must stand still!	341
Fig. 6-30 Wołany. Nobody is moving, except for the person with the ball in the middle who is aiming at the selected participant.....	342

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INTRODUCTION

IN THE WORLD BETWEEN GLOBALIZATION AND COLLECTIVE CULTURAL IDENTITY

Until recently, along with the popular concept of “globalization,” i.e., huge unification processes, internationalization, homogenization of the world etc., the decline of regional and local cultures has been proclaimed. It seemed that in the so-called “post-modern” reality, characterized by the incredible acceleration of time and space, and constant changeability, forcing small communities to adopt universal cultural patterns, there was no place for any “otherness” anymore. It was seen as a continuation of the hegemony of Western culture, which would result in political, social and, above all, cultural, global homogenization.¹

This situation, however, has evoked an interesting phenomenon—a strong reaction of local and regional communities, ethnic groups and nations. They did not want to “disappear” in this globalizing reality. To avoid it, they have started to return to their own cultural heritages, local and national traditions and the roots of their collective identities. In consequence, a fascinating trend can be seen in the contemporary world, sometimes opposite to globalization, at other times complementary to it—the manifestations of local, regional and national, collective cultural identities of various communities, ethnic groups and even entire nations.

¹ Waldemar Kuligowski, *Antropologia Współczesności* (Kraków: Universitas, 2007), 9–13.

It is happening because, nowadays, people seem to have already reached the “peak” of their “fascination” for globalization and are more and more aware of its threats, related to the excessive mechanization of the world, industrialization and its effects, life in the “concrete jungle,” uncertainty of the “modern” (or “post-modern?”) world, etc. The reaction to this is the above-mentioned movement for the preservation and promotion of one's own heritage and the search for collective cultural identities. This need is still very strong in the twenty-first century.²

There are several symptoms indicating these cultural changes. “Fast” (called “liquid”³ by Zygmunt Bauman) life, in the reality of global flows of people, money, symbols and ideas, has stopped satisfying many people. Interestingly, opposite initiatives are emerging in different corners of the world related to such activities as the “slow life” movement and TV station—surprisingly popular in Norway with many very long broadcasts of cruises or train journeys— “slow food” organizations, etc. There are more and more such activities. It is about seeing and appreciating values of tradition, culture, heritage, our roots, a “slower” and simpler life, threatened by globalizing flows.

These trends have already been seen in nineteenth-century Europe, along with the romantic movement of reappreciating traditions, associated with various fields of folk culture, inspired by the works of Johann Gottfried Herder. At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there were other initiatives, such as the so-called “back to nature” movement, restoring and cultivating ancient traditions, ceremonies, nature,

² Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

³ Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Life* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

more harmonious social life, etc.⁴ In the contemporary world, this trend continues with, among others, reappraisal of the meaning of collective cultural identity.

What Is Collective Cultural Identity?

Collective identity in general can be understood as “sharing similar ideas and attitudes by the members of the community.”⁵ There are many kinds of such identities related to various types of communities. One of them is cultural identity (French: *identité culturelle*, Spanish: *identidad cultural*, German: *Kulturelle Identität*).

According to Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells, it is “the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or a related set of cultural attributes, that is/are given priority over other sources of meaning.”⁶

These “cultural attributes” are common elements, traits or values, shared by a given community, constitutive for it and distinctive from the others. They help local and regional groups and nations maintain, express, strengthen and promote their cultural identities in the globalized world. Such elements are as follows: the distinctive language of a given group, separate territory, religion, common origins, history, shared customs, sense of belonging, and many others.

However, in the current, globalizing, sociocultural reality, these “cultural attributes” are sometimes insufficient. They are often contested

⁴ Henning Eichberg, “Folk Sports and Traditional Games in Europe,” in *Sports around the World: History, Culture, and Practice*, ed. John Nauright and Charles Parrish (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2012), 304–312.

⁵ Zbigniew Boksański, *Tożsamości Zbiorowe* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2006), 44.

⁶ Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 6.

and questioned as solid foundations for building and maintaining a stable sense of identity. This is due to the fact that the phenomenon of cultural identity in general and its traits in particular are changeable. They undergo a continuous process of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction, depending on the changing, sociocultural or political contexts in which a given social or ethnic group exists, creating and manifesting its collective sense of belonging.⁷

Moreover, it is not only about “having” an identity or “being” a member of some communities, although, according to American sport anthropologist Jeremy MacClancy,

the rise of the ethnic has been so pervasive that it feels at times as though every person is meant to ‘belong’ to some ethnicity, almost every one of which is implicitly supposed to have the right to have or to campaign for its own nation-state (...).⁸

Nevertheless, only to “have” or to “possess” ethnicity and identity is not enough in the contemporary world. In order to maintain their own ethnic and cultural collective sense of belonging, various communities have to actively support, manifest and promote it. The above-mentioned “cultural attributes” serve them to do it. Due to the fact, however, that such attributes or traits as language, territory, customs or religion are being questioned and are not always sufficient to create a strong, collective identity of a given ethnic group or a nation, many of them search for something new or reach for the neglected or forgotten elements of their

⁷ Agnieszka Chwieduk, *Alzatezczy. Dylematy Tożsamości* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2006), 42–49.

⁸ Jeremy MacClancy, “Sport, Identity and Ethnicity,” in *Sport, Identity and Ethnicity*, ed. Jeremy MacClancy (Oxford: Berg, 1996), 9.

own culture that could strengthen their cultural sense of belonging, still very important in the contemporary world. One such cultural attribute is sport.

Sport as an Element of Collective Cultural Identity

From time immemorial, a broadly understood sport has been serving, among others, as an element helpful in creating communities. Probably, we would not be able to find any community, ethnic group, or a nation on our planet without at least some forms of sport or physical activity, both in the past and nowadays. Ranging from prehistoric tribes, through ancient Celts, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and many other groups all over the world, as well as “modern” nations, emerging in the nineteenth century, ending with contemporary communities, ethnic groups, societies and nations, all of them have “sports” or similar physical activities important to them from many points of view.⁹

In the recent decades, sport has gained new opportunities to be included in the identity-related “projects” of many human groups. The inseparable “marriage” of modern media and sport¹⁰ has made even its traditional forms possible to reach with their *message* to a wider, global recipient. In consequence, various types and forms of sport have become more and more significant elements of the contemporary creation, preservation and promotion of the collective cultural identities.

Nowadays, the meaning of sport in general, and its traditional forms in particular, is particularly significant in the context of globalization. As

⁹ Wojciech Lipoński, *Historia Sportu* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2012), 422–442.

¹⁰ Andrzej Gwóźdź, “Media i Sport. Wprowadzenie,” in *Media, Eros, Przemoc. Sport w Czasach Popkultury*, ed. Andrzej Gwóźdź (Kraków: Universitas, 2003), 7–20.

Polish scientist Małgorzata Bronikowska notes, “modern globalization has caused a hunger for ethnicity and cultural identity.”¹¹ Sport is one of these areas of social life that has become a kind of a “food” to satisfy this “hunger.”

The hitherto literature on the relationships between sport and collective identity have focused on three main issues. The first one is the role of sport in creating social and cultural understanding between nations. One example is the importance of sport in overcoming national differences between nations of the former Soviet Union. The second issue examines the functioning of sport as an element of international (even armed) conflicts.¹² An analysis of the so-called “football war” between El Salvador and Honduras,¹³ as well as the situation in the USSR, where sport was an element of conflicts between its nations,¹⁴ or the Olympic Games in Berlin (1936), and their role in the propaganda of the Nazi regime,¹⁵ are good examples here. Finally, the third field of research deals with the role of sport as an element, helping communities, ethnic groups and nations create, maintain, manifest and promote their collective cultural identities.¹⁶

My book focuses mainly on the third (though related with the first one) of the above-mentioned relations between sport and identity. According to

¹¹ Małgorzata Bronikowska, “Globalizacja a Narodowe Tradycje Kultury Fizycznej—Szansa Czy Zagrożenie?” in *Kultura Fizyczna a Globalizacja*, ed. Zbigniew Dziubiński and Piotr Rymarczyk (Warszawa: AWF, 2010), 203.

¹² Jeremy MacClancy, “Sport, Identity and Ethnicity,” in *Sport, Identity and Ethnicity*, ed. Jeremy MacClancy (Oxford: Berg, 1996), 7.

¹³ Ryszard Kapuściński, *Wojna Futbolowa* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Czytelnik, 2004).

¹⁴ James Riordan, *Sport in Soviet Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

¹⁵ Guy Walters, *Igrzyska w Berlinie. Jak Hitler Ukradł Olimpijski Sen*, trans. Norbert Radomski (Poznań: Dom Wydawniczy Rebis, 2008).

¹⁶ Alexander Motyl, “Sports and Nationalism,” in *Encyclopedia of Nationalism* vol 2, ed. Alexander Motyl (San Diego: Academic Press, 2001), 508.

the already-cited Jeremy MacClancy, “Sports (...) help to define moral and political community.”¹⁷ Sport can be an element, sometimes even an important “cultural attribute” or a distinguishing trait of cultural collective identities of various communities. They use it to support, manifest, promote or even create them.

Sport also serves to strengthen international and cultural exchange, mutual understanding and sometimes reconciliation of historically conflicted nations, and, thus, realizing, even to a small extent, the idea of the shared cultural heritage of the world. This is important in the contemporary world, where global processes dynamically interact with local grassroots initiatives of various communities.

In this context, of particular importance are very interesting and valuable types of sport—traditional sports and games (often referred to by their English abbreviation as TSG), which are the main subject of this book.

What Are TSG?

In 2009, during the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Collective Consultation on TSG in Teheran, the group of experts led by Guy Jaouen and Wojciech Lipoński defined them as follows:

“Traditional sports and games are motor activities of leisure and recreation which can have a ritual character. They are part of the universal heritage diversity. They are practiced in an individual or collective manner, deriving from regional or local identity; they are based on rules accepted

¹⁷ Jeremy MacClancy, “Sport, Identity and Ethnicity,” in *Sport, Identity and Ethnicity*, ed. Jeremy MacClancy (Oxford: Berg, 1996), 2.

by a group that organizes competitive or non-competitive activities. Traditional sports and games dispose of a popular character in their practice and in their organization, yet if turned into sport tend to be uniformed and institutionalized. The practice of traditional games promotes global health.”¹⁸

Sport anthropologist Kendall Blanchard specifies TSG as forms of sport activities directly tied to specific ethnic or folk cultures. They contain elements of competition, are physical, playful and fun, but have limited or no professional variants, tend to be more local in their expression and have stronger ritual features than the so-called “modern” sport.¹⁹

Both definitions are useful. Even if they do not contain all the traits of a “traditional sport,” they emphasize the essential characteristics of this type of sport: locality (though not always); rather amateurish (although professional forms also occur); stronger attachment to ritual and culture than in the case of the so-called “modern” sports; often recreational character, with the rules sometimes spontaneously created and changed by the playing group; rooted in local or regional cultures. These definitions also underline the important goals of traditional sports, such as preserving traditions, education, creating a global cultural heritage or promoting global health.

¹⁸ UNESCO, “International Charter of Traditional Sports and Games,” *Internal Act of UNESCO*, 2009, 1, held by Wojciech Lipoński.

¹⁹ Kendall Blanchard, *The Anthropology of Sport* (Westport-Connecticut, London: Bergin and Garvey, 1995), 248.

Traditional Sports as the Elements of Collective Cultural Identity

The relationships of various sports referred to as “modern,” the most popular, the most “mediatized” and commercialized (especially football in Europe, baseball or American football in the USA, ice hockey in Canada, etc.) with collective identity are a frequent subject of scientific works.²⁰ TSG, however, are still neglected in this matter (although their situation is gradually improving too). Meanwhile, according to Kendall Blanchard, traditional sports are surprisingly *compatible* with the current and the future cultural and ethnic situation of the world.²¹ Therefore, they definitely deserve more attention.

In the world of global flows of people, information, money, symbols or ideas, sometimes “colliding” with the manifestations of local and regional cultural identities of various communities, such “cultural attributes” as traditional sports are especially needed. Why? According to Blanchard, one of the most important arguments in favor of the *compatibility* of traditional sports with the contemporary sociocultural reality is that they are associated with the growing need for expressing identity, regional culture and its local heritage. For many communities, it can have a significant impact on consolidating their cultural, collective sense of belonging²². Therefore, TSG are becoming increasingly promoted elements

²⁰ Jeremy MacClancy, “Nationalism at Play: The Basques of Vizcaya and Athletic Bilbao,” in *Sport, Identity, and Ethnicity*, ed. Jeremy MacClancy (Oxford: Berg, 1996), 181–99; Grant Jarvie and Graham Walker, ed., *Scottish Sport in the Making of the Nation* (London: Leicester University Press, 1994); Ramon Llopis Goig, “National Orientation—Universal Look—the Symbolic Capital of FC Barcelona in the Global Era,” *European Journal of Sport and Society*, no. 5(1) (2008): 63–71; and many others.

²¹ Kendall Blanchard, *The Anthropology of Sport* (Westport-Connecticut, London: Bergin and Garvey, 1995), 254–58.

²² Blanchard, *The Anthropology of Sport*, 257–58.

of collective identifications of many local or regional groups and even of entire nations. What is equally important is that they do not usually *divide* peoples, who “close” themselves in their identities and differences, but rather they *unite* and integrate them, helping to create cultural understanding and enabling communities and groups to live together in a global world. Rather than entering into conflicts, they can celebrate the increasingly common phenomenon of multiculturalism and cultural diversity in the contemporary world, by sharing their experiences related to TSG.

Such traditional sports, also referred to by their expert Henning Eichberg as “modern folk sports,” have been developing in three main phases in the recent centuries. In the nineteenth century, with the romantic return to appreciating folk and rural traditions, as well as the formation of nationalisms and modern nations, TSG became part of these movements. In some countries, special organizations were established using native forms of physical culture for identity creating and promoting purposes. In Ireland, for instance, it was the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) and in French Brittany, the Federation of the Friends of Breton Wrestling and Athletic Sports (FALSAB). The second phase of TSG development consisted of including these sports in the so-called “Return to Nature” movement at the turn of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Young people were gathering in various organizations (including ecological ones), dedicating their free time to play games “in the bosom of nature.” The third phase of traditional sports’ development was the so-called “New Games Movement,” originated in the US State of California in the 1970s and associated with the “Sport for All” movement, still active today.²³

²³ Henning Eichberg, “Folk Sports and Traditional Games in Europe,” in *Sports Around the World: History, Culture, and Practice*, ed. John Nauright and Charles Parrish (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2012), 310.

In the twentieth century and at the beginning of the present century, apart from strong globalization, popularization, “mediatization,” commercialization and the effects (positive and negative) of “modern” or “international” sports, we have been observing more and more frequent signals indicating a growing significance of and appreciation for local and regional traditional sports, often associated with cultural heritage of numerous communities striving to preserve their identities. They reach for their own traditions in the field of sports and games, and create from them very important elements of their collective and shared culture. It allows them to manifest their “uniqueness:” still a very strong mechanism all over the world.

Obviously, the use of TSG for the above-mentioned aims is not the same for all local, ethnic or national groups. Some of them have shown exceptional dynamism and practical activity in this respect, while the others have neglected their traditions in the field of sport. Nevertheless, various initiatives are developed, using TSG to promote collective cultures, which are so important in the age of globalization.

TSG are an increasingly appreciated, scientific and practical issue. They create an extraordinary reservoir of knowledge about the culture of a given community, society or nation. These sports and games have different origins: some of them come from former activities, related to work; the others derive from the competitions for military service. Some of them were somehow created by individual inventors. In each of these cases, TSG are often important elements of the communities’ cultural identities. Moreover, they have numerous values and several functions that are particularly meaningful in the current world. They have become not only a significant element of cultural heritage, but also an important factor for the peaceful exchange of experiences between nations and cultures, giving

them opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity through the participation in sport and international relations.

As a Polish scientist, and expert in traditional sports, Wojciech Lipoński noted, “recently, there has been a growing, international interest in old sports, known as traditional or, due to their most common genesis, as regional or folk.”²⁴ This author estimates the number of these types of sports, games and plays as more than seven thousands worldwide.²⁵

The huge amount of TSG around the world gives numerous opportunities for their scientific investigation, appreciation, and practical use for local and regional communities, entire nations and humanity as a whole. As the President of the International Traditional Sports and Games Association (ITSGA) Guy Jaouen claims, “the importance of the diversity of these play practices is more and more affirmed by the works of scientists, who show that games have an immense capacity to develop the energy to construct individual and collective identities (...).”²⁶

We should ask here: what factors decide whether a particular, traditional sport functions in a given community as a part of its cultural collective identity? It is the specific way of playing a given sport, its rules and functioning as a praxeology system, the so-called “internal logic,” as well as its background—the conditions in which it is practiced, the values

²⁴ Wojciech Lipoński, *Rochwist i Palant* (Poznań: AWF, 2004), 5.

²⁵ Wojciech Lipoński, *World Sports Encyclopedia* (Poznań-St. Paul: Oficyna Wydawnicza Atena, 2003).

²⁶ Guy Jaouen, “The Institutional Environment of Adult Traditional Games and Social Health,” in *Juegos Tradicionales y Salud Social*, ed. Guy Jaouen, Pere Lavega and Carlos de la Villa (Aranda de Duero: Asociación Cultural La Tanguilla, 2009), 41.

and the meanings it brings, the relationships with the other areas of culture and social life, etc., i.e., the so-called “external logic.”²⁷

I focus, in this book, primarily on their external logic, i.e., sociocultural contexts (especially identity-related, cultural, social, educational, recreational, tourist, health and others) of a particular sport or a game, since they often determine their cultural significance for a given community or a nation. Nevertheless, I will also indicate some examples, showing the importance of an internal logic in these types of sports and games for their functions in a given culture. As Professor of Sorbonne Pierre Parlebas believes, capturing features, related to the specific “way of playing” a given game, and traits, associated with the so-called “playful situation,” may be fundamental to understand its meaning and distinguishing it from the other games. As this researcher claims, “these internal logic traits are ‘distinctive’ traits that correctly define, the motor movement by which the varied configurations allow us to make a sustained and objective comparison of traditional games.”²⁸

TSG Research Movement—the Selected Examples

Due to the growing importance of TSG in the above-mentioned contexts, several studies and practical activities with these types of sports and games have been developed in Europe and all over the world, dealing with the descriptions of TSG, their classification, research on their

²⁷ Pere Lavega, Francisco Lagardera, Fidel Molina, Antonio Costes et al, “Los juegos y deportes tradicionales en Europa: Juega con tu corazón, comparte tu cultura,” in *Games and Society in Europe*, ed. Pere Lavega (Valencia-Barcelona: Asociación Europea de Juegos y Deportes Tradicionales, 2006), 21–23.

²⁸ Pierre Parlebas, “The Destiny of Games Heritage and Lineage,” in *Ethnology of Sport. Special Issue of Studies in Physical Culture and Tourism*, vol. X, no. 1, ed. Wojciech Lipoński and Guy Jaouen (Poznań: AWF, 2003), 19.

numerous functions, roles, and significance for particular communities and for the humanity as a whole.

In the nineteenth century, in England, there were important, scientific initiatives undertaken, related to sport, physical activity, traditional sports and their sociocultural significance. I can mention here, among others, two books: “The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England,” written by a pioneer of sports ethnology Joseph Strutt;²⁹ and Alice Bertha Gomme’s “The Traditional Games of England, Scotland and Ireland.”³⁰ Moreover, a distinguished, British cultural anthropologist, Edward Burnett Tylor, wrote an article on the history of games.³¹

In the twentieth century, the amount of works related to TSG was regularly increasing. Among others, French researcher Jean Jules Jusserand published a book entitled “Les Sports et Jeux d’Exercice dans l’Ancienne France” (Sports and Physical Exercises in Ancient France).³² German scholar Karl Weule wrote a long article, “Ethnologie des Sports” (Ethnology of Sport).³³ A pioneer of physical education in Poland, Eugeniusz Piasecki, published significant books on the genesis of Polish and foreign traditional games and plays,³⁴ etc.

²⁹ Joseph Strutt, *The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* (London: Methuen & Co, 1801).

³⁰ Alice Bertha Gomme, *The Traditional Games of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (London: David Nutt, 1894).

³¹ Edward Burnett Tylor, “The History of Games,” in *The Study of Games*, ed. Elliot M. Avedon and Brian Sutton-Smith (New York: John Wiley, 1971 (1st edition 1879)), 62–76.

³² Jean Jules Jusserand, *Les Sports et Jeux d’Exercice dans l’Ancienne France* (Paris-Geneve: Champion-Slatkine, 1901).

³³ Karl Weule, “Ethnologie des Sports,” in *Geschichte des Sports alter Volker und Zeiten*, ed. Gustav Adolf Bogeng (Leipzig: Seemann, 1926), 4–73.

³⁴ Eugeniusz Piasecki, *Zabawy i Gry Ruchowe Dzieci i Młodzieży—ze Źródeł Dziejowych i Ludoznawczych, Przeważnie Rodzimych i z Tradycji Usnej* (Kijów: Książnica PTNSzW, 1916); Eugeniusz Piasecki, *Tradycyjne Zabawy i Gry Ruchowe* (Warszawa: Horizon, 1919).

It was in the second half of the twentieth century, however, when the subject of TSG was developed to a greater extent. Numerous initiatives were undertaken, both by more general, sport and cultural institutions, as well as by the organizations specializing in TSG, and European researchers who have made their significant contribution to this issue.

In 1978, UNESCO created a very important document: “International Charter of Physical Education and Sport.” It was a starting point for the adoption of a later document dedicated specifically to the role of traditional forms of physical culture in the current world.

In 1986, the same organization sent a letter to the ministers of United Nations’ member states, recommending the need for protection and development of TSG (as well as dances) as significant goods, serving to preserve the cultural heritage of humanity. Three years later, UNESCO acknowledged TSG as one of the most important manifestations of traditional culture and its world heritage, worth protecting to the same level as architecture, music, the arts, or language.³⁵

In 1994, the European Parliament also drew attention to the need for studying and promoting TSG, and created a special Commission to deal with these issues. Five years later, in Punta Del Este (Uruguay), a meeting was held with the participation of sixty-four ministers, high officials and NGO’s representatives, involved in physical education and sports-related issues. They were working in several Commissions. Commission No. 2, recalling, inter alia, the above-mentioned “International Charter of Physical Education and Sport,” underlined the need for the organization of the World Festival of Traditional Sports in 2000 (under the auspices of

³⁵ Pere Lavega, “Traditional Sports and Games in 21st Century Europe: Future Challenges,” in *Games and Society in Europe*, ed. Pere Lavega (Valencia-Barcelona: Asociación Europea de Juegos y Deportes Tradicionales, 2006), 281–82.

UNESCO) and recommended that all United Nations' member states support their games. The members of this Commission also suggested to Director-General of UNESCO the introduction of the global policy on TSG, in cooperation with organizations and experts, dealing with these issues.

It finally led to the creation of a special document—the UNESCO's "International Charter of Traditional Sports and Games," established after a series of international conferences and seminars in the years 2000–2005. This document has unprecedentedly raised the role and importance of TSG for mankind.

Its preamble emphasized the need for the adoption of this Charter for the purpose of broadening the accessibility to healthy recreation, physical education and Sports for All by preserving, supporting and promoting TSG all over the world, thus ensuring the continuation of the rich diversity of the sports culture world heritage for the services of humankind.³⁶

This document also underlined numerous and important values of TSG. They make a significant contribution to mutual understanding and peace between different social and cultural groups, communities and nations. It acknowledged TSG are less susceptible to the commercialization of sport, its manipulation, doping, etc. Moreover, traditional games are to strengthen the values associated with the spirit of fair play. They are also an effective tool for promoting tolerance, mutual understanding, respect, and peace in a culturally diverse society.³⁷

Of particular importance was that the Charter highlighted a special role of TSG in maintaining and expressing collective cultural identities of various communities.³⁸

³⁶ UNESCO, "International Charter of Traditional Sports and Games," *Internal Act of UNESCO*, 2009, 2, held by Wojciech Lipoński.

³⁷ UNESCO, "International Charter of Traditional Sports and Games," 5.

³⁸ UNESCO, "International Charter of Traditional Sports and Games," 6.