

-POPULAR GAMES- ECLIPSE AND REVIVAL

From Traditions to the
Regions of the Europe
of Tomorrow

Under the direction of Guy Jaouen and Jean-Jacques Barreau

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TEXT FOR THE SEMINAR

The Carhaix-Berrien meeting is not merely a commemorative act, designed to celebrate in a retrospective way the virtues of some traditions. The deeper reasons for such a large gathering here are to do with the concerns which modern-day living cause people.

Amongst these concerns, and one which stands out due to its urgency, is the decline of social and community links, which is no mystery. The burning question is : how to revitalise and , these links, and what contribution can traditional games and gatherings offer ? For example, is it necessary to update traditional games just as that we call Olympic games today were updated a century ago ?

It is mostly recognised that traditional games, always carried out in a festive atmosphere, offer a symbolic occasion to illustrate the solid and durable nature of social links despite the differences and cleavages between individuals.

Whereas it is precisely this dimension of community life which has suffered all the blows in the setting up and organisation of contemporary life. This is also the reason why this question continues to be asked.

In this context, to what extent are we able to base our hopes of reactivating these links on this traditional heritage ?

Studies of traditional games which have been carried out can help, their conservation value, in a domain where methods and customs, mostly passed on orally, explain the rarity of direct witness accounts, can be interpreted in two ways : quantitatively and qualitatively.

On a quantitative basis, one observes a considerable recession in these traditional games and their progressive replacement by activities of a stateless or transnational nature, amongst which modern sport is well represented ; but however there has been a rebirth of similar traditions in certain areas, not only in Brittany, but in the majority of European countries, whether it be Scandinavia, the British Isles, Flanders, the Basque country, Spain, Canaria, the Valley d'Aosta (Italy), etc. couldn't this renaissance be the mark of a reorientation, through the active participation of individuals, in official programmes which had not always allowed for these changes ?

On a qualitative basis, on the other hand, these studies illustrate the social role played by these sports emanating from the heart of community traditions, as is to case for Gouren in Brittany. It is therefore necessary to assess in detail the advantages and disadvantages involved in including them in the usual round of sport competitions and demonstrations. One asks oneself if the alternative is not to be found in the "socialisation" aspect linked with the sporting world.

There are many who committed themselves because they had heard of and been told about its fraternal and convivial nature. But, they gradually discovered a less attractive reality, became disillusioned as it became obvious and one is daily more and more aware of it, that sport, and everything which revolves around it, is worlds apart from altruistic values:

- participants and spectators irrevocably separated, (which is not the case in traditional festivals: in Gouren there was the moment when the heralds "challenge" spectators to participate in a mock demonstration with champions, all in good spirit of course, as elsewhere one invites the onlooker to join in a dance, so no-one feels left out. This "laughter" culture, as some researchers refer to it, is gradually dying out in the world of sport. For example , one does not "try one's hand" against a hard-hitting boxer, nor a hammer thrower who throws incredible distances ; one would look ridiculous;

- Above all, sport encourages these anti-values more and more ;(drug-taking, aggression and violence through hooliganism, the cult of the "Golden Calf" with the blessing of "temple merchants", nowadays referred to as sponsors") which feed the continuous process of alienation from oneself, from others, from artificial environments;

- without mentioning, finally, the disappointment felt by individuals who have not found within the sporting "community" the socialisation model promised them by the founders as well as the sports instructors and which was supposed to reflect the organisation of modern society. Some people, forced to give up after repeated disappointments, then turned towards what was offered by traditional games, which, with their precarious nature, have remained the prerogative of minority groups.

Thus, following the example of minority regional cultures, shouldn't a new attractive be considered ?

That is to claim the acceptance of these traditional games no longer in a sports framework (Federation or League), but in an explicitly cultural one, along the lines of what has been done for the minority languages mentioned above. In this case it could be the setting up of a:

European Bureau for Popular Games, Festive Traditions, Minorities and Regions

The creation of such a body would soon show that Europe houses a majority of minorities and an exceptional sporting heritage.

Such an initiative would at least act as a safeguard for regional identities. As for their festive gatherings, they would no longer have to fear being brought into line with sports. They could on the contrary expect the decision makers to encourage their development by providing local authorities with their own facilities, as has sometimes been the case for example in Flanders, Ireland, Canaria, Valley d'Aosta and Denmark.

One could then hope that these new arrangements would, without discrimination, revive co-operation between partners who still don't regard themselves as such.

The debates programmed in Carhaix and Berrien will throw light on these questions. In addition, the discussions will be a reflection of the will and determination of participants, the Cumbrians, Aostans, Basques, Bretons, Cornish, Danish, Flemish, Frisians, Welsh, Irish, Icelanders, etc. to demand this recognition.

THE NECESSITY OF PRESERVING AND PROMOTING TRADITIONAL SPORTS

Prof. Guy Jaouen, Secretary of the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling,
President of the Confederation FALSAB (TSG of Brittany)

FROM TRADITIONAL TO MODERN SPORTS.

When certain traditional sports were classified in the 19th century, it was for educational purposes and especially for the young elite. The economic and social context of Europe was very different to the Europe of today. With the coming of the industrial revolution, came the end of an era.

When such games became fully fledged popular sports in the first part of the Twentieth century, the social and cultural situation was again very different. In France at this time for example, the minority peoples attempted to forget their traditions which were for them synonymous with the past and backwardness and thus an impediment on the development of their region. This was even stronger in those regions which had a strong identity and tradition, fuelled by the existence of own language.

In this context, the reconstruction of the old Olympic Games is based more and more on a spirit of record breaking and would explain why so many sports at a high level do not contribute to any culture, tradition or stable social structure. I am not talking of any new sports, created for commercial reasons, like skate boarding for example...

Today, this urbanised consumer society is suffering from a **disease of her own making**.

SOCIETY IN CRISIS.

In this urban society, a large number of young people are experiencing the pain of finding themselves and knowing their roots. Since the economic "boom" of the Sixties, there has been a marked breakdown of the nuclear family, with the loss of established values as a result. This situation is the logical prolongation of an attitude instilled by the "decision makers" of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is now the root cause of such serious problems as drugs, gratuitous violence, individualism leading to selfishness and even racism.

Our purpose is not to find those responsible, although we ourselves should take some responsibility, due to our passive acceptance of the situation.

THE STATE OF MODERN SPORT.

It is obvious today that sporting events are a victim of their own success, partly due to the direction which was taken at the beginning of the century. The example of sport **at a high level** reveals that it is a victim of "seriousness". Seriousness in that we forget to enjoy the game. It is a victim of standardisation, it does not carry with it any social values or culture and it is the victim of worldliness. The sports themselves are no longer masters of their own fate because it is now the world of money which governs. The Olympic Games have become increasingly the games of professionals where the gain of a centimetre or a tenth of a second means a raise in salary and more commercial interests. As a result, young athletes, players and the clubs too often forget the educate aspect of the sport and its physical benefits.

THE EDUCATIONAL ANGLE.

Our European governments have believed and still believe that they can utilise the educational benefits of sport to cushion us from the bad effects of modernity, but at the same time they let these same sports be diverted into a universe where they are no longer in control. The violence in and around the stadiums are forcing them to think of other solutions. Unfortunately, they are waiting for the answer to fall into their laps.

SPIRITUALISM.

The attempt to find a certain spirituality is not completely absent from the sporting world. The emergence of the martial arts and the notion of the Ying and Yang adds **exoticism** and an appearance of spirituality. These forms of combat are now an accepted part of the sporting world, but do not of course reflect European culture.

THE VALUE OF TRADITIONAL GAMES.

Why for some years has there been discussion of Traditional Games that are still played? Why suddenly safeguard these relics of the past which are part of our culture, when the majority of "deciders" have held them in disdain for over a hundred years. It has taken us a long time to appreciate the value of such sports. The motivation is not to resurrect dead traditions, but to utilise all that is good on a social sportive and cultural level in these traditional sports in order to answer certain social questions which are being posed by modern society. To be precise, it is not a matter of accusing actual sporting events, even though there often exists a dark and suspicious side to them. Our traditional games must be allowed to develop in their own time and in their own way.

For all these reasons, traditional Games and sports must have official recognition and find a place parallel with so-called world sports. They could indeed grow, but in the context of cultural growth, in order that they might conserve their own values.

We are possibly at the end of an era and what we are living at this present time is an attempt to create support for a new society- simpler and more convivial.

DIFFICULTIES AND COMPLEXITIES.

The traditional games did not succeed in gaining recognition at the beginning of the century, no doubt hampered by their own authenticity. In fact, the official world of sport at a high level is bothered by our presence because we are still "clean". Our sports are inexorably linked to our cultures and aren't generally modelled or modified for an audience as a spectator sport. Yet many young people refuse our regional sports as they consider it to be worthless and demeaning to take part in a minority sport which in addition is not recognised and is even repressed by the media, in schools etc. Some even treat us as reactionaries or even as people living in the past. There is the awareness therefore that devoting time to sport does not give the expected results on a social level. A comparison could be drawn with the complex reaction and feeling towards minority languages. The value of taking part in sport is not the most important factor to be taken into account today.

A SOCIAL ROLE.

What role can Traditional sports fulfil? The majority of those who take part in these sports would argue the following. Is there not a less aggressively competitive, more down-to earth atmosphere? Are there not champions who seriously undertake their role? Is there not a spirit of equality between the best and the less able?

To return to a general plan, traditional sports, when adapted to urban life, could introduce many social and cultural elements. For example, **the atmosphere** : that taking part is more important than winning. Secondly, **the transmission of ancient social values** : The older generation know more about traditional sports, therefore introducing such sports in towns would encourage more communication between the different generations. Thirdly, **cultural differences** : Can we imagine an Europe, where in every region or country, you would find the same standardised sports and dances as in your own! Fourthly, **tolerance** : Not taking the sport too seriously and getting to know other cultures and competing without aggression can only lead to tolerance on a larger scale.

CONCLUSION

This text is a personal reflection on the state of affairs in 1991. These ideas will evolve with the movement which is taking shape in Europe at the moment and the future will show us how accurate our hypothesis has been. At the present time, there remain certain factors which must be taken into account if we are to develop. We must invent a new viewpoint for competitive sports.

In addition, why should not athletes take part in an Olympic sport as well as a traditional sport ? This would enable traditional sports to become "recognised". It would certainly aid those athletes who wish to develop their traditional sport. Many athletes are aware that there is something "wrong", but they are rendered helpless by the enormous organisational machine which faces them.

Tactically, we must understand that the direction for traditional sports is parallel and not contrary to Olympic and spectator sports. We must take the cultural and convivial path for the game and for competition.

TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS, GAMES ACTIVITIES AND SPORTING EVENTS

Jean Jacques BARREAU, Ph.D
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The attention given to traditional games and sports could be seen as a sign of the times. Are we here to point out the old-fashioned charm, face to face with the largely orchestrated Sporting events which in front of our very eyes, never cease to draw our attention or capture and recapture our interest; and places us in an atmosphere where we don't forget to voice our eternal regrets? Or perhaps we need to learn to focus on their strength and their timelessness in order that we can study their resistance to the cultural factors they have been exposed to and which could, in the long term lead to an acknowledgement of their existence or even a Renaissance.

In the majority of the regions of Europe and also further afield, a movement is beginning with the purpose of safeguarding on a local level the continuation, development and promotion of such sporting events.

Indeed, a very evident factor is the extreme difficulty in distinguishing the destiny of such traditional sports from that of modern sports when their relationship is so complicated; a factor we must address if we are to attempt to consolidate this Renaissance.

If we do not wish to see a number of these sports becoming extinct; reinforcing a sort of collective amnesia which certain people would call modernity, there remain other solutions which aid us in understanding the implications of such a Renaissance.

Globally for traditional sports and festivals, apart from complete extinction, there are two other alternatives:

1. Emphasis on the "Traditional" aspect of traditional sport: That is to say the redefinition according to the needs and requirements of the politic of tourism. This situation does not only apply to the regions of Europe, such as the carnival of Nice, France, the "Binche" in Belgium, the Highland games in Scotland, or the "Palio" of Sienna in Italy, but also of African, Latin-American and Asiatic countries.
2. Emphasis on the "Sport" aspect of traditional sport: That is to say, a transformation of the sport itself, without identifying it as characteristic of it's specific region. But is it possible perhaps to envisage another solution?

FROM THE TRADITIONAL ETHIC TO THE SPORT ETHIC

Recently, on French television, in the opening commentary of a rugby match which took place in "Parc des Prince" in Paris, a reference was made to "a demonstration of Basque strength".

This comment should be remembered and should also cause us to think. Was this an attempt to incite the exhibition team and test its strength, or was it simply an attempt to utilise the "traditional" to create another "match of the century"?

At the very least, it appears to be a rather curious initiative and connection between two types of exhibitional sport, different in the forms which they represent; especially in the spirit of the game. The former is a sporting festival while the latter is a spectator sport and due to a difference in their social and cultural impact we may form a dividing line between the two. If it is true that there exists a real tendency to commercialise all sports, traditional sports and events are therefore at risk.

The difficulty in this for us is that there aren't two completely separate sporting worlds to be taken into consideration, on one hand traditional festivals, and on the other, large sporting events. In all truth, they hold in common something which the world as a whole shares. The need to compete and take part in combative sport. These epitomise the most obvious traits of human nature. According to Johan Huizinga, "Homo ludens" is older than "homo sapiens". This eminent historian who specialised in Prehistory, could not disprove the theory of a degeneration in combat sport, a culture which certain researchers now refer to as "the culture of laughter".

The same theory was expressed twenty five years earlier by the American sociologist of Scandinavian descent, Thorstein Veblen, when he examined the effects of social expansion of leadership sports in American society.

Huizinga is perhaps mistaken; but in this case as in others, we are not fully aware of the gravity of the situation. The untold number of daily sporting events parades its successes in front of our very eyes to the detriment of the true spirit of sport, known as "Coubertism".

AN UNRECOGNISABLE PROGRAMME.

The Baron of Coubertin dreamt of a sport driven by the ideal of peace and the four educative principles which would progressively lead the youth of the entire world towards tolerance and mutual respect (by learning the principle of fair play), more fellowship (by the bringing together of peoples and nations), more impartiality (by maintaining the statute of amateurism) and finally by nurturing more self respect (by the fact that the skills of sport could enable them to know their own limits in accomplishing physical fitness). We know the outcome of this programme, the drive towards physical fitness is transformed into obtrusive exhibitionism. Self respect is replaced by drugs which destroy the body, the Temple sellers have condemned amateurism to death and as far as fellowship and tolerance goes, we have but begun to count the cost of their disappearance. We should remember the Olympic Games of the Reich in 1936, when Hitler abruptly left the ceremony, refusing to shake the hand of one of the heroes of the games, four times medal winner American Jesse Owens, on the grounds that he was black; just as he had already organised with the active participation of the Nazi bureaucrats of sport the expulsion of all Jewish athletes in the National Team, knowing that there wouldn't be widespread International condemnation.

In such ruins, we should be content with the fact that the ideal of peace has not been completely destroyed and that there rest elements untouched by such a disaster. Indeed, it wasn't sport that declared war. We should remember that under such conditions it seems that the forces that have destabilised sport the most and have therefore placed in jeopardy its

credibility are an integral part of each and every sport and not an external factor. An attempt at compensating for this de stabilisation is by proposing more and more attractions. This nevertheless places the Coubertin dream nearer to Rome and it's circus than to Olympia and it's gods.

THE TIMES OF RETRIBUTION.

We can assume nothing of the sort in our study of Traditional sports, in as much as the objections and protestations we could see come essentially from the exterior. For reasons which are understandable, certain sports, especially those which lead to acts of cruelty against animals, such as rating, bull-baiting, bear-baiting and cock fighting are banned either partially or totally. Cock fighting still takes place today in the Philippines and remains a clandestine sport in Europe and Spanish bull fighting is an integral part of Spanish culture. But as far as we admit to the presence of regional sports and their development and describe them for the chroniclers and witnesses, it would be better to marginalise them in order to denounce any excesses and also to condemn the efforts of the corrupt who maintain their own corrupt version of their regional sport.

We should not forget to mention also the anthems presented by Philipp Stubbs in his celebrated work "Anatomy of the Abuses", which was published in 1583. It illustrates this same point ,but from a less militant angle. It is indeed true that in France, half a century before Stubbs, a doctor and monk called Rabelais, sang the virtues of sport and he highly recommended study on the subject for his pupil, the Giant Gargantua and the members of the famous Abbey Thalami community. For Stubbs, it was not just fiction, but actual reality which he saw in the England that he visited. Indeed, he was alarmed by the customs that he saw there. For him, any action that wasn't dedicated to the glory of God lead directly to mortal sin. The universe of combat was created by the devil and this Satanic universe was spreading it's evil in all directions. The anatomy of abuses is first and foremost the abuse of the human anatomy.

Every aspect has been seen; gluttony, drunken debauchery and prostitution, extravagant clothes and hairstyles, crinoline robes and costly perfumes. What scorn was poured on the Saints of humility by the sinners in their Carnival costumes ! Stubbs was just as contemptuous of Fairs and markets, which were too often a pretext for licentiousness; Drama which satisfied only the most basic of human instincts, with nothing to inspire fear or dread as in the Ancient plays. The dances favoured promiscuity and finally the games themselves which were the last attack on morality-Whether it were cards, dice, tennis or skittles and in conclusion it was the turn of football to be debased. Stubbes could not accept any form of combat as amicable or any game as recreational, or any sport as a way of passing the time; All such activity doubly contravened religious principles and was "a murderly and bloodthirsty practice". In addition, they often took place on the Sabbath. Stubbes was a Puritan and the in observance of the Sabbath was on principle wholly unacceptable.

Such condemnations gave popular games an unfavourable image. Stubbes did not reserve his criticism to rural and village areas, he also turned against the middle class who organised their own pastimes. Such ideas spread to the majority of the countries of Europe and imposed themselves forcefully enough to create a lasting oppression of the sports on those in public authority. With Stubbs it is spiritual authority which is voiced and later the authority of time which follows. We can see the official opinion against popular sports in their prohibition by Royal order, statutes by Synod or by the local police force and lastly the Earldoms of the Nations of Europe

from the fourteenth to the Nineteenth century. It is historians who begin to change the situation by showing us that behind all these actions and the prohibition which it provoked. There was a radical change in the social structure; traditional games represent the last surviving bastion of rural social organisation.

Indeed the question of exercising the right to take part never got that far. The rights of common law were enough. Every member of the population was invited to take part in such events. No-one was excluded. The establishing of festivals and the fulfilment of sports took place with the approval and even active participation of those in positions of responsibility locally, even the Lord and Lady were present for some events. In Brittany, the Historian Henry See talks of the right of "soule" (an ancient form of rugby).

It is the emergence of a written law, helped by an instrument of civil coercion, the police in particular, which resulted in a considerable transformation of the State and thus the removal of the common law, which begins the process of the devaluation of traditions and festivals that Stubbs had anticipated.

With Industrialisation and the decline of rural areas it is this rural organisation which is brought into play and is the seed of a social conscience which only begins to weaken at the time of the Revolution. The passing of time changed this idea of organisation dramatically. Rural sports, which took place in free time in the farming season were a real social event in the rural calendar and were succeeded by other forms of sports, a separate time of urban activities and sports. After the remodelling of space and landscape, it is the social landscape which was to be progressively changed. Sport, according to R.Malcolmson, does not now depend on planned holidays, ruled by work on the length of the day, but rather on a timetable calculated by the production of industry. This results in a new social structure and the partial destruction of a tradition of competitive sports and local festivals. As a result we can see the break down of relationships between individuals; brutally removed from their familiar environment and artificially grouped together, but this time in large industrial cities; trying to trace a new path towards acceptable companionship. We know this situation and its trials and tribulations well. It is our own situation.

FROM REPRESSION TO URBAN ACCEPTANCE - THE APPROPRIATION OF TRADITIONAL GAMES.

All observations, especially those of ethnographers, show that society still has traditional festivals and a heritage of competitive sports. Such a tradition would appear to be more resistant when it is cemented by a collective desire to insure its' conservation. We could even ask ourselves if sometimes the efforts of certain communities tend towards a preoccupation with the festival and games themselves, only to be made aware later of its' constraints. It seems that contrary to the widespread modern vision adopted by the West, the ambitions of combat sports and festivals are more evident when the difficulties of living conditions are more evident.

This point is well illustrated in the research of Steward Culin for example, who concentrated on Oriental pastimes in Corea and Alice T.Cheska, who studied the traditional games of The Inuit tribe of North American Indians. We can clearly see similar traits in African dances and the Naven ceremony of the Iatmul people of Papua New Guinea ,as noted by Gregory Batesin. During this ceremony, the cross dressing of the actors and the reversal of sexual roles reveals a complete reversal of normal relationships, or an even more extreme example of the "potlatch"

game of American societies, which if not stopped, could bring about the material ruin of the society itself. As such events can make the contradictions and pain of life bearable, they show characteristics which modern past times have not been able to accept.

Different from sporting events which work towards a Cosmopolitan unity, traditional games and sports have never got rid of social contradictions which modern sport has a great tendency to exaggerate, because in a sense they are a result of these social contradictions and it is for this reason that we can always interpret them as the routes of research which show the desire to demystify the mystery of life.

In addition to this, the activity of sports and festivals are at the same time their justification and we are not surprised to find them borrowed by and adapted to modern sport.

Both village games and the sports which took place in fairs can also be seen in a modern sporting context. From the "Hornuss helvetique" and the "fioletto valdotain", to cross country sports and sports like golf or all varieties of hockey, to Celtic Wrestling and combat sports, to Caledonian games and the famous Highland Games and then towards athletics. Or even the Morris-Dances or the dances of swords or knives, as are found in the British Isles and the Basque country could have a link to Rhythmic gymnastics. At a glance, there doesn't seem to be an obvious difference; indeed the road linking these sports together seems short but the technical definition of such activities does not give a full explanation of their singularity. The big difference is the definition of the purpose of such past times. The big sports event tries to maximise the gain while minimising the cost; the logic of economics is prevalent and it can be seen in the establishing of an audience. With traditional games and festivals, it is important to create and consolidate a collective and individual identity. In this case, it is a social logic which is at the forefront of the participation of every community member and is an indication of lively intercommunication in the community itself. The day of a festival ceases to be a contrived event, it is long awaited. Rather than ignoring it, we may go to socialise and soak up the atmosphere.

FROM THE ATTEMPTS AT DEVELOPING SPORT TO ITS' DEGENERATION

The success of a sporting event can, as we have seen, generate the conflict that the players or spectators of tennis are necessarily the players or spectators of a football match, a boxing championship or equestrian event etc. The more such rifts persist, the more they become displaced. The dynamic of absorption is a characteristic of a sporting event through the cultural development which it encourages.

In the case of traditional games and festival and in particular those which involve physical participation; the sporting tendency is not just a tendency in itself.

In the light of this, one can observe the "jogging" craze of the Seventies, which introduced a deviation from the norm for sporting events. Some individuals, such as the sociologist P.Yonnet, saw this movement as a backlash against spectator sport, led by anti-heroes. The large increase in other sporting experiences such as expeditions or a safari in Kenya, trekking in Nepal, or white water rafting in the Amazon brings about a dissatisfaction in what traditional sports can offer. Some sport entrepreneurs are still able to organise events such as Car rallies in the African desert, transatlantic navigation and circumnavigation, or mountain expeditions in order to create a sensational event or championship. We are now able to find research which mentions the development of non-sportive sporting events. We are arriving at a new cross-roads, where it is possible to make new the old forms of sport, depending upon whether those

who are concerned with the organisation of sport will listen and help through financial support and organising sport on a more personal social level.

CONCLUSION

The availability of technical and financial help will not ensure the success of such a project, even if they are considered a priority. We have seen in the passing years a revolution on a grand scale which has given three reference points to society: liberty, equality and fraternity. If we have indeed made progress towards liberty we should not complain that it is too often only on an official level. It is surely better to have official recognition of civil liberties than acceptance of repression. The same could be said for equality, although we are obviously far from achieving this goal, one could argue that we have advanced on many fronts. As far as brotherhood is concerned, there is much work to be done. The mountain of intolerance has not been conquered and in this context, perhaps a Renaissance in traditional sports and sporting events could be the means to an end.

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THE POPULAR TRADITION OF OUTDOOR GAMES IN BRITTANY

Prof. Fañch Peru, independent researcher

1 - An ancient and original tradition of rural games.

Playing games was one of the very first activities of the human race. The Bretons, like their predecessors in the territory now known as Brittany -continental Celts and the mysterious peoples of the megaliths- had a passion for games.

Amongst the most ancient of these games, -lacrosse, "soule", races, stick games, wrestling- some have survived almost unchanged, others have evolved into modern sports.

Bazhig kamm or Bazh dodu: lacrosse.

An article by P.R. Giot, in the chapter on games and art in "Prehistory of Brittany" published by Ouest France, briefly evokes the hypothesis that the representations of sticks carved or raised on the sides of dolmens -in particular on the stone at the end of the dolmen chamber at Locmariaquer (dolmen des Marchands)- could be the sticks or clubs used in a form of cricket or golf. This is just a guess of course, but it's not impossible that our ancient ancestors knew "bazhig kamm".

Closer to our times, this game is mentioned in a Breton medieval religious play of the 16th century, the "Life of Saint Barbe" (1557). Two shepherds have a lively game in order to take the stiffness out of their legs and to warm up. Another reference to the game can be seen in the porch of the Martyr's church (Finistère). There is a little sculpture of a person hitting a ball with a curved stick.

This game, which was known throughout Europe in the Middle Ages, was played on a flat ground. In Brittany, a hole was dug at each end of the pitch as a goal for a little ball made out of hard wood, bone or stone. The ball was placed in the middle of the pitch, then, two teams tried to bring it each to their own end and place it in the hole or "poullig" using a curved stick, the "bazhig kamm" (a little curved stick called a "cammel" by the shepherds in "The life of Saint Barbe" cited above.)

The game could last for hours and demanded great skill and endurance from the players. Accidents were quite frequent, sprains and fractures being the result of the enthusiasm of the players.

Later on there was an important change in the game: the goal was placed not on one's own side of the pitch but on the side of the adversary, which totally transformed the game and developed towards the modern game of hockey.

Ar vell : La soule or hurling (French) : the ball.

The origins of this game are obscure and the first time it is mentioned in writing is at the end of the 12th century though there are some vague earlier references. The chronicle of Lambert d'Ardres speaks of a vast terrain where country folk gathered to drink and play "soule". Etymologists have proposed various explanations for **Soule** or **Choule** from the most serious to the most imaginative. The Icelandic word "sul" meaning a melee has been evoked, also "solea"

(Latin; the sandal) with the expression "souler ou pié" (Old French) in mind, which occurs frequently in the archives.

Taking into account the fact that the game was played periodically, the verb "solere" (Latin; to be in the habit of doing something) has been suggested. Others have put forward the idea of the division of land into "soles" (French) by reference to the place where the game was played. Most folklorists like to connect "soule" to the sun "heol" in Breton or "sul" but it is difficult to follow this reasoning because the word "soule" is more widely used in France than in Brittany where the persistence of the Celtic language would have assured the conservation of the word better here than anywhere else. The game is played with a ball (ar vell) and throughout lower Brittany the game of "soule" was called "ar c'hoari mellad". The ball was made of leather stuffed with hair, bran, wood shavings or sometimes with dried dung.

"Soule" is mentioned in "Robin and Marion's game" in the "Roman de Renart" in which Gargantua distinguished himself. The game must have been widely practised because on April 3rd 1365, Charles V proclaimed it forbidden to play as a bodily exercise. The reason for this ban: the excess of pugnacity of the players. However, although the game doesn't seem to have been banned by the Breton sovereigns (Brittany was independent at the time) the ecclesiastical authorities were not so lenient as witnessed by this denunciation from the statutes of the synod of Raoul, bishop of Treguier, published in 1440: "this law decrees that dangerous and pernicious games must be prohibited due to the hatred, spite and enmities which, under the guise of recreation and pleasure, accumulate in the hearts of many and their poison may be unleashed on some baneful occasion. Thus, we have discovered by the reports of some honest citizens, that in certain parishes and other places under our jurisdiction, during holidays and otherwise, people go in for a very pernicious and dangerous game (and this has been going on for a long time already) played with a round, large and powerful ball, a game known in the local vernacular as "mellat".

There have already been many scandals and it is clear that there will be more serious incidents in the future if a suitable solution is not found. This is why we forbid this scandalous and dangerous game and declare that any person from the diocese found practising the above mentioned game will be penalised by excommunication and a fine of one hundred "sols". It doesn't seem that this threat or those that followed after, whether from the civil or religious authorities, had much effect. During the entire 19th century the local governments of Finistère and Morbihan (in Brittany) tried to abolish the game, but in vain.

The rules of the game were very loose. In general two teams opposed each other, usually two parishes. However, it sometimes happened that three parishes took part as in the famous game of 1889 between Locuon, Mellionec and Plouray which was played on the border between the departments (counties) of Côtes d'Armor and Morbihan on the moors of *Lanneier Gallhouarn*. The winner was a lad from Locuon. Though "soule" was essentially a team game like soccer or rugby which have developed from it, it also had its champions. Whoever succeeded in getting the ball out of a scrum, skilfully passing it to a team mate, holding on to it as long as possible running towards the goal, and most important of all, planting it on home ground, became a hero. The accounts of the time tell us that the ball, furnished to the lord by his vassals, was thrown into the game close to the church, often from a stone dais (la pierre de bannie) either by the lord himself or his representative, the seneschal or the fiscal procurator, the latest man to be married in the parish or the winner of the previous game (though this usually only happened in a game between two teams from the same parish, often a team of bachelors against one of married men.)

For the games between two parishes, the ball was generally thrown-in close to a little chapel on the border between the two. Instead of being played on flat ground, here it was played in the rough and over a large distance usually from the parish church or chapel to the border of the neighbouring parish. Everything was permitted, from hiding in forests and thickets to swimming across rivers and lakes. There were often drownings. Thus, at Pont l'Abbé fifty people were drowned in the lake surrounding the old castle as the game was being played during the high tide.

Unable to ban the game, the dominant class made it official in the Middle-Ages and thus "soule" became an established feudal right. This law was perpetuated to the point where we hear it mentioned in the official book of complaints of certain towns in 1789, as the privilege to practice it had disappeared.

After the Revolution, manorial games fell into disrepute and this was one of the main reasons for the disappearance of "soule", as it was considered as a sign of submission to the nobles. Only in the more traditional and rural Morbihan, less open to reforms, did the game continue up till the second world war.

Thus disappeared an ancient sport which had impassioned Bretons, a sport close to "hurling" (Cornwall) and "knappan" (Wales), a rough and rustic sport which gave way to soccer and rugby which are less brutal because of stricter rules.

. Races.

Running and horse-racing were amongst the favourite sports of the Bretons and were an integral part of their festivals.

. Stick or club games.

Tool, toy and sometimes weapon, the stick has given rise to many games which Tristan played in ancient times in the forest where he fled from the thunderbolts of his uncle, the King Marc.

"Je ai sailli et lanciez jons et sostenu dolez bastons" (Old French)

"I threw reeds, I held smooth sticks in hand".

Some of these sports have survived: "bazzh yod"; "bazzh a benn"; etc...We will study them later under the section on games at the Feast Day festivals or "Pardons".

.Wrestling. See Feast Day games.

2 - A medieval tradition of town games.

The amusements in the towns of Brittany were much the same as found elsewhere. Here are a few of the most common.

.Le papegaut .

An old word for parrot, this was a game of archery. First played with a bow and arrow, then with a cross-bow and eventually in the 16th century, the arquebus. The target is a wooden or iron bird, placed on top of a high pole. "Papegaut" was played in towns which had received this privilege from the king. The dukes of Brittany authorised the establishment of the game in their principal towns. The best archer was proclaimed king of the papegaut for one year which bestowed certain privileges on the lucky winner and much expense.

. Quintaine

Originally a game of the nobles training for war, quintaine became popular due to being amongst the feudal privileges. It was played by young people, usually newly-weds, on certain days of the year. It consisted of sparring with a wooden lance against a dummy dressed as a soldier and armed with a cudgel or a broom. The dummy pivoted on an axis; it was hard luck for anybody who didn't strike a direct hit, he received a blow of the cudgel as the dummy pivoted.

. Paume

This game, first introduced to France in the Middle Ages, was originally played with the hand but later-on with rackets which bear a strong resemblance to those used at the beginning of the 20th century by tennis players. Short "paume" was played indoors and with a net while long "paume" was played outdoors, without a net and by teams of six players.

3 - A melting pot where the games of country people and seafaring people intermingled: the saint's day festival (Pardons).

The pilgrimages to churches and chapels where Papal indulgences and pardons were accorded were known as "Pardons" (Feast Day of the local Saint...Patterns in Ireland). At certain times of the year, the faithful flocked to these venerated sanctuaries to gain the indulgences attached to the pilgrimage and to pay their respects. The idea of forgiveness of sins was later expanded to include a festival or Feast-Day. According to J.M. Guilcher, "there are now as many Feast-Days as places of worship. Even the poorest country chapel has its own Feast-Day and is not looked down on". From immemorial times the "Pardons" were one of the building blocks of religious life with a mass, processions, vespers and benedictions.

Quite often, slightly unorthodox beliefs and practices slip into the proceedings : folk rituals and medicine, preventive medicine for animals, looking for portents etc....some more or less Christianised, others just about tolerated or unknown to the clergy. Nowadays the "Pardon" is a secular fête, with its usual attractions (stalls, fun fair, singers, wrestling) and of course, one of the most popular events, dancing."

Since ancient times in fact, the secular and religious fêtes overlap in the Breton "Pardon". Often, the wrestling and games started when the prayers had barely finished. When the "Pardon" went on for a few days, it was the custom (especially in the Tregor), to have the games on the Monday. This day was called "ad Pardon", "ad" or "had" meaning return or repeat in Breton. However, all the games didn't necessarily take place on the Monday. In certain parishes, they started on Saturday and finished Tuesday, sometimes Wednesday. Nevertheless, the term "ad Pardon" covered a precise group of games.

Little by little, during the 19th and especially the 20th century most of the popular outdoor games were grouped together at the "pardons". Carnival games, like beheading the cock or goose and Low Sunday (Quasimodo) games were added alongside the wrestling and feats of strength. Thus, a secular "Pardon" developed, a sort of annual sports meeting which sometimes eclipsed the importance of the religious fête much to the despair of the clergy. The priest of Maël-Carhaix complained to his bishop, Monsignor Caffarelli that there was a bit too much emphasis on sport at the "Pardon" of Paule.

"Whit Monday is the "Pardon" of the chapel of St.Eloi, in the parish of Paule. It is a gathering of horses rather than people. The fast race around the church and the grave-yard sometimes

results in mishaps. However, mass is said there that day because the priest can't refuse, but it is something that should be forbidden because of the abuse."

For the study of the "Pardon" games we have adopted a method of classification that's not very original but is quite efficient. We may group them into: athletic games or feats of strength, games of skill and various others.

A - Athletic games.

I. Ar Gouren. wrestling.

Gouren or breton wrestling has very ancient origins which can be traced through texts, engravings, sculptures and statues in different Celtic countries. Introduced to Brittany by our ancestors at the time of their migration, it was very popular during the Middle Ages and the 16th century. In 1455, when the Duke of Brittany, Pierre II, went to visit the king of France at Bourges, he was accompanied by a group of renowned wrestlers : Olivier of Rostrenen, Guion of Kerguivis, Olivier of Kenec'hriou, etc..

During the meeting of the Field of Cloth of Gold ("Drap d'or") in 1520, François Ist, seeing that the English were winning at wrestling, regretted not having played a Breton team (Henry VIII had brought wrestlers from Cornwall). Henry VIII challenged him to a personal wrestling match and the reports say that the king of France, who was a very good wrestler "caught him in a Breton hold and threw him on the ground in a marvellous assault". Wrestling was still a favourite sport right up to the French Revolution. From the 19th century on, its practice was restricted to Lower Brittany, particularly in the country-side during the "Pardons". This form of wrestling was restored and regulated during the 1930's by Dr. Cotonnec and friends who formed the F.A.L.S.A.B. (Federation of the friends of Breton wrestling and athletic sports).

Nowadays, there are six weight categories in Gouren for seniors (feather, light, middle, middle-heavy, heavy and super heavy) and there are also age categories for the young. There are about a thousand members in forty clubs in the five Breton counties and the Breton clubs in Paris. Gouren is performed on sawdust in summer and mats in winter. The wrestler wears shorts and a strong linen shirt. The object of the game is to pin both shoulders of the adversary to the ground at the same time. This hold of the two shoulders is called a "lamm" and it ends the combat. Each time an attack results in a near "lamm" a point is given, but contrary to Graeco-Roman wrestling, the combat doesn't continue on the ground. Breton wrestling is played standing up.

It is important to note also that each bout is preceded by an oath of loyalty in Breton and in French, the players embrace and shake hands before the fight. Formerly, a game played at the "Pardons", Gouren is today becoming a game played by athletes in clubs, and this follows the general evolution of sport at the moment. If the quality and technique of the game have gained a lot, the passion that animated the spectators of two neighbouring, rival parishes cheering their respective champions is tending to disappear.

2. Sevel ar berchenn, gwernian ar berchenn : pole lifting

In this game the player must lift a wooden pole, holding it by its narrowest end, into a vertical position. The pole is usually made out of young beech wood, pine, elm, etc., and is five or six metres long. The participant is allowed three tries for each round. The traditional technique "krog perchenn" is the side lift, which copies the technique used by the village strongmen to lift

the large banners for parish processions. It can also be placed between the legs, this lift is called "krog sac'h" (sack lift). If the pole is too heavy, a piece is sawed off. If it is too light, weights are added. Steel poles with moveable weights have come into use over the last few years. It is easier to measure individual performances more precisely with them but it is less spectacular to watch.

3. Ar c'hravazh : the stretcher

The stretcher is a sort of wheelbarrow without a wheel, loaded with sacks of sand or heavy stones. The participant has to lift it by the shafts from a crouching position, right up off the ground, to a standing position. The strongest manage to lift about 500 or 600 kilos with an abrupt and violent movement. This game, having justly been declared dangerous for the spinal column and lower back, is now only practised in a dozen or so parishes around Lannion and Tréguier.

4. Ar sarc'h, gwintran ar sarc'h : the sack, lifting the sack.

This game consists of hoisting a sack filled with sand, weighing more than a hundred kilos, from the ground onto the shoulders. As in the previous games, the competition proceeds by elimination. The competitor who hasn't managed to lift the sack after three tries is eliminated. Derived from the work of millers and farm labourers, this game, which certainly requires strength, but also a special technique, still has some followers especially around the region of Tréguier.

5. An ahel karr : lifting the axle.

In the traditional Tregor method, the game consists in lifting a cart-axle progressively loaded with weights, employing a technique similar to weight-lifting but using only one arm for the lift above the head. In other places, the axle of a lighter cart is used (around forty seven kilos). The competitor seizes the axle with both hands and, without moving the feet, using a lift similar to weight-lifting, lifts it above his head as many times as possible in three minutes. Between each lift the axle is replaced on some logs without removing the hands.

6. Ar maen pouez : weight throwing.

Progressively, primitive stone-throwing competitions (there are many local saints famous for stone-throwing) were replaced by throwing a twenty kilo weight, using the weights of an ordinary weighing-scales. In the Breton traditional technique, it is allowed to take as much space as one likes behind the line to gather speed as long as the starting-line is not crossed. The F.N.S.A.B, have substituted stricter rules now, more in line with Olympic sports and more adapted to high level competition.

7. Ar voutell-blouz : "sheaf tossing".

This spectacular game consists in throwing a hay-bale as high into the air as possible.

8. Stick games - Breton games

The Celts in general and the Bretons in particular seem to have revelled in stick games. These games were often quite dangerous like the bastinado related by Anatole Le Braz where teams from Cornouaille and Vannes played at the feast of St. Servais for the honour of carrying the banner and the statue at the procession. Nowadays, the games are more peaceful, such as "ar vazh-yod" the stirring stick and "ar vazh-a-benn" the stick held by the end.

. **Ar vazh yod** : the stirring (gruel) stick; "Pulling the stick".

To play this game, two competitors sit facing each other on the ground, their feet pushing against a wooden plank in the middle. Between them they hold a large stick with both hands. To win the game, one player must either pull the other over to his side of the plank or force him or her to lose hold of the stick.

. **Ar vazh a benn** : Pulling the stick by the ends.

Held up, stretched out flat by four strong men while others pull the feet, the players pull a stick longways, each holding an end with both hands. The winner is the one who manages to keep the stick.

A variant of this game also existed called "an touseg", the toad. The rules were the same as those of "vazh-a-benn" but instead of a stick there was a wooden plank with two handles, vaguely resembling a toad. Louis Esquieu describes such a game in his work "Popular childhood games in Rennes"; "The three strongest youngsters from each village would meet in a field ; two from each side would clasp their hands together facing each other and the third would lie across the outstretched arms of his friends ; the other team does the same and faces the first so that the two players lying on the arms of their comrades can seize the plank with their hands, each trying to gain possession of it, without their feet touching the ground".

It is possible that originally a real toad was used in this game and was torn apart in the process. Thus the name of these games, "décaisser ou écaisser la guernouille" which means to quarter the frog (in the dialect around Rennes, "caisse" means "cuisse" i.e.thigh or leg. It is not sure that Louis Esquieu's account is entirely credible but there is no doubt that he is talking about the same game as we described above.

9. An tortis, chec'h fun : tug of war.

A rope about twenty five meters long is used for this game. The centre is marked and positioned directly over a line marked on the ground. The teams may consist of five or six people. The object of the game is to pull your opponents across the central line. Each game has two tries and a third one when necessary with the teams changing sides. The teams for each match are drawn by lots. In certain areas and in games organised by the F.N.S.A.B, it is not necessary to pull the opposite team across the line to win. Two other markers are placed equi-distant from the central marker (usually three meters) and become the new reference points.

B- Games of skill.

These games are popular even outside the context of the "Pardon" and may be played indoors in winter-time. However the "Pardon" being a traditional get-together on a fixed date, it is a great pretext to organise some matches.

1. C'hoari boullou : bowling.

This is the most popular of the games of skill. Known in Brittany since the Middle Ages it is quite similar in its rules to bowling games in other European countries. The aim is to place a ball as close as possible to the Jack (**Cochonnet** in French, **mestr bihan** in Breton meaning "little master"). It is possible to eliminate the adversary's ball by different techniques : by rolling the ball along the ground, by dropping it from above or by rolling it against the side with a rebound. Originally played in lane-ways and on village squares with stone balls (maybe even with salvaged cannon-balls) or balls made from local hardwood, the game has evolved over the 19th and 20th centuries. The rules have stayed more or less the same but the game is played nowadays on a bowling alley about eighteen meters long outlined by wooden planks. Balls made of lignum vitae (guaiacum wood) salvaged on the quays of the port of Nantes replaced the

locally made wooden balls up till the nineteen sixties when a new synthetic ball of Italian fabrication arrived on the scene.

In certain areas of Brittany, lead weights are added to improve the natural touch that the player imprints on the ball. It is often possible to recognise the area a player comes from by the number of lead weights in his ball : one weight - the Tregor area, three weights - Léon, five weights the region around Morlaix (also known as "Little Tregor").

Although bowling is very much a social event, especially in the Tregor where hardly a fête or school open-day goes by without a bowling match, in rural areas it is also one of the favourite family pastimes.

A few other bowling games exist here and there, the most interesting being Morlaisien bowling and "boultenn". The first of these games still holds a place of honour around Morlaix and is played in a long, large and well flattened alley. Large wooden balls are used with five leaden weights which cause them to curve as they roll. The rules are rather particular and the game bears quite a resemblance to British bowling.

"Boultenn" is a game played at local festivals and is exclusive to Quimper and its environs. The aim is simple : the player, armed with three balls stands at 8.5 meters from his target, three other balls placed on a wooden block. If he hits the ball in the centre, he gets two points, either of the other two get one point each. In order to win, one must get a fixed number of points as rapidly as possible. For singles, the game usually goes to twenty-one points, for doubles, thirty-one points, for teams of three players, forty one points, etc.... Bowls are also used in other games such as "passe-boules", "cocarde", the hanging ball, "toul ar c'hazh" (cat hole), "patigo" and many more, too numerous to describe here.

2 .C'hoari stouv, c'hoari galoj, c'hoari paledoù : wooden peg and quoit (metal disc) games .

The wooden peg game is a variation of playing at quoits, a game which was widespread in Europe since the Middle-Ages and which survived in Brittany in various forms: "little quoits" in Ille et-Vilaine; the Bigoudène "galoche" or wooden peg game; "galoche" on a wooden block from Little Tregor; "boulloù-pok" in Guerlesquin; quoits on the ground from the centre of Brittany, quoits on the road from Morbihan, "pechoù" from Plougastel. There are numerous occasions for playing these games but for the last two in particular, the "Pardon" is the most popular.

Here is a brief description of different types of quoits:

. Quoits from Ille-et Vilaine.

The quoit is thrown onto a plank five meters from the player. The "goal" is called the "master". The quoit is made of steel and weighs one hundred and thirty grams maximum. It can be played individually or in teams of two or four.

. The Bigoudène "galoche" or wooden peg game.

This game was very popular up till quite recently all over Brittany (people from the Tregor remember having played it in the nineteen fifties) and in certain counties of West-Central France. These days it is restricted to the Bigoudène area, south of Quimper. The rules were recently changed to make the game more interesting.

The game consisted of knocking down a "galoche" (a wooden cylinder 11.5 cm high) with iron quoits weighing 850 grams. A coin is placed on top of the "galoche" and the quoit that lands closest to the fallen coin is the winner. It is usually played by two teams of two players.

. **"Galoche" on a wooden block from Little Tregor and the Berrien/Scrignac area.**

Matches of "galoche" are still played in the area between Morlaix and Plestin. The "galoche", a small rectangular shaped piece of wood, six or seven cm high, is placed on a strong wooden block. The player takes position about nine meters away and must knock the "galoche" off the block using six large quoits. The winner is the one who gets the most points over two rounds, i.e; using twelve quoits.

. **"Bouloù-pok" from Guerlesquin.**

Here and there original quoit games still exist such as "bouloù pok" in Guerlesquin which is played with quoits made of box-wood and lead weights. Played only in this town at carnival time, it is very popular each year at the Mardi Gras when the "world championships" are held.

. **Quoits on the ground from Central Brittany.**

Each player has two iron or metal alloy quoits weighing 220 grams. The game is played between two mounds of earth about 17 meters apart. Games are played up to twelve points and may be played in singles (penn-eus-penn), doubles, and teams of three or four.

. **Quoits on the road (Morbihan).**

The players take position 13 or 14 meters from a line drawn on the road. A coin is placed at the centre of the line. The object is to place the quoits, weighing 350 grams, as close as possible to the coin. Nowadays the quoits are smaller.

. **"Pechoù" (Plougastel, Finistère) .**

This game is played with shaped stones, some weighing 2.5 kg. The target, "ar mestr" is placed ten meters away.

3. C'hoari kilhoù : skittles.

Many variations of this game have been lost in Brittany since the end of the last war. In South Finistère, nine skittles (simple, shaped wooden logs) are used in the game and five balls (rounded stones). The skittles are set up in the form of a square. The central skittle, which is worth nine points if it is the only one knocked down, is called "the old lady". The middle skittles are worth five points each if knocked down one by one, the little ones are worth one point each. If a few skittles are knocked down at the same time, each one is worth one point.

"Kilhoù-Kozh" has become popular again recently and is a variant of the game described above. Skittles from the region of Léon using a rebound off an embankment, the "straight game" from Léon, skittles from Carhaix, Pomeleuc and Muel are still played at fêtes and "Pardons".

Nine skittles are used in each of these games and they may be of different sizes. Stones, ordinary balls, bowling balls with finger holds or even projectiles resembling mallet heads (as at Muel) can be used to knock down the skittles. The methods for counting the scores vary a lot with each game.

C. Various other games.

Amongst the myriad of games that could be classed in this section are: all sorts of races; egg and spoon, sack and wheel-barrow races; string-chewing, sausage-eating and cider-drinking competitions; "lick-the-pan", decapitate the cock or goose, "baquet russe", "break the pots", slippery pole, etc.... Here is a description of the last five games, the others being quite simple and well known.

. **Lipât ar gleurc'h, lipât ar bilig:** lick the pan.

A pancake pan covered in grease is hung above the heads of the participants. Coins are stuck in the solid grease. The players try to unstick the coins using only their tongues and noses, hands behind their backs.

. **Dic'hougan ar c'hilhog pe ar vaz:** beheading the cock or goose.

This game, of ritual origins, was known throughout Europe since the Middle Ages. It is still popular in about a dozen parishes of Central Brittany.

The animal is strung up by the feet with a rope, leaving a space underneath for the players to pass using a stick (roughly in the shape of a sword) either on bicycles or pulled in a cart. The aim of the game is to decapitate the fowl. The winner may keep the bird as his prize or may be presented with a fresh one, a bit less mutilated. Nowadays, the animal is killed before the start of the game to comply with the rules of the Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals but this was not the case formerly when real horsemen with genuine swords attacked a live bird.

. **" Baquet russe "** .

Some see this game as a parody of Quintaine, (a game of jousting practised by the nobles) others recognise that its origins are obscure. A tub of water is suspended by various different means in a street or small square. There is a plank with a hole in it attached to the bottom of the tub. The player, who is standing up in a cart pulled by a comrade, must try to pass a wooden spear through the hole under the tub. If he touches it but fails to pass the spear through, the tub of water overturns on his head to the delight of the spectators.

. **Terrin ar c'hozh podoù:** break the pots.

This game which used to be played on Low Sunday (1st Sunday after Easter) is now part of the "Pardon" games, probably only since the last century. A dozen or so flower-pots, filled with a wide variety of objects are suspended from a sort of cross-beam. They may contain anything from a live pigeon to a handkerchief or a purse, flour or even a liquid of some sort. The player is blindfolded, turned around a few times, given a stick and pushed towards the flower-pots. He strikes blindly with the stick and if he breaks a pot he may keep its contents provided they haven't disappeared in the general hilarity.

. **ar wern:** slippery pole.

This is a very high, smooth pole sometimes smeared with soap. A bicycle wheel or a metal circle from a barrel is attached to the top. From the circle are hung various types of sausages, cakes, bags of sweets, toys and gadgets that the players must try to unhook if they get to the top of the pole.

D - Aquatic games.

At seaside villages and towns and those beside rivers and lakes, the annual fête used to be, and sometimes still is, a great pretext for aquatic games such as jousting, duck races, horizontal-slippery pole, swimming competitions, rowing races, etc...

This then, is a broad outline of traditional "Pardon" games in Brittany. By no account have we exhausted the subject, far from it perhaps. However, we think that nothing essential has been left out. To conclude we would like to stress that although most of these games are not specifically Breton in origin, the Bretons have left their own mark on them, acclimatised them, integrating them into their work and their play, creating numerous variations for each of them, and inventing a technical vocabulary in Breton to go with them.

Although the decline in the rural population these days and the diffusion of urban, mass-media culture jeopardise our ancient traditions, we can still hope that the most popular games (wrestling, pole-lifting, bowling, quoits, etc...) will survive and even develop thanks to the revival of fêtes and "Pardons" in villages and small towns. This revival is being encouraged as people rediscover the enjoyment of the fête.

E - Games for children and teenagers.

Some of the adult games were, and sometimes still are, practised by children such as "gouren", "bazzh-yod" and "bazzh-dodu". A special place is given to children's games at the "Pardon": slippery pole, break the pots and all sorts of races. There were many other games that children and teenagers loved and which they played in the fields (while minding the sheep or cows for example), on the village squares or in the school playgrounds.

Some of the most popular were :

. stick games :

- "bate" also called "quinet" in French and "pilaouet" or "mouilh" in Breton : bat games.
- "diskar tour a vablon" knock down the tower of Babylon and "diskar ti ar c'hure" knock down the priest's house.
- "ruilhal ar broc'h"; roll the badger.

. acrobatic games:

- "plantan peul er prad" or "tourig ar prad", headstands, a game called "poirier" the pear tree in French.
- "kas an touseg d'ar mor"; throw the toad in the sea.
- "c'hoari patati"; leap-frog.
- "c'hoari chouk-lamm-penn"; head-over- heels.

. Games with home-made toys:

- "c'hoari krige-raden" a game with fern hooks.
- whistles, horns, catapults, wind-mills, stool-pigeons, dolls, stilts, pop guns.
- hoola-hoops, spinning-tops, bowls, skittles, ropes, balls, quoits, marbles, bones etc...

These toys were made by the children themselves from bits of wood that they would find outside (chestnut, hazel, elderberry, reeds, gorse, etc...) or from bits and pieces that they found around the house (thread-reels, corks, buttons, elastic, string, oakum, etc...). Sometimes they would ask an adult or local handyman to help.

SOME OLD COUNTRY GAMES AND PASTIMES OF IRELAND

Andrew Steven, journalist, Ireland

Introduction

About three years ago, I discussed with Joe O'Kane, a Belfast artist, the possibility of producing a painting which would illustrate some of the old games and pastimes enjoyed in the Irish countryside over the centuries. I provided Joe with photographs, a few sketches, written descriptions, and demonstrated some of the games to him. The resultant atmospheric painting will, hopefully, be one of the illustrations in a book being written by me on the old games of Ireland. A reproduction has already appeared on the back cover of the Annual Report (1988-89) of The sports council for Northern Ireland.

In Ireland, unlike England, the village inn or pub, and its environs, was not where most of the traditional games were played. In Ireland, such games and pastimes were enjoyed mainly where the rough stone roads intersected - the cross-roads - and, equally informally, on the beaches and fields. As will be appreciated by readers, most of these "amusements" were, or are, so simple and basic that they resemble similar activities found in continental Europe, indeed throughout the World. Some of the games may have been introduced into Ireland by invaders, settlers, visitors and others over a long period. At this distance in time, however, it is not easy to be too dogmatic as to say definitely whether a game originated in Ireland, or came in from the outside. Sometimes, indeed, both types of source were involved. The illustration shows games played mainly by adults, though children imitated some of them, and, also, adults adapted childish activities. Sometimes, both adults and children played the same games at the same time. In former years (unlike today), they were games for men alone - the women had other duties and pastimes, and rarely appeared in this male domain (except for their presence at dances). The rural Irish (often living in great poverty) never had much time for leisure and games playing (many of the activities illustrated only took place in the busy summer months, and sometimes at fairs).

Joe o'Kane's illustration shows a selection of games chosen by myself - others might have been included, but were not for a variety of reasons; for example, showing curling on ice would have taxed Joe's ingenuity in his depiction of this summer scene! If the painting were to be done again tomorrow, I would certainly have asked Joe to include wrestling, as I continued to find echoes of this activity throughout Ireland after the painting was completed; it was also, I found, an event at the ancient Tailteann Games. Joe sketched a pig in the centre of the painting to add to the interest and local colour, along with the donkey, cattle, hens, etc. - pig-chasing, however, used to be as popular in Ireland as it was elsewhere. Some of the games illustrated, as stated on the greetings card, are no longer practised.

I now refer briefly to the games numbered, and in the order, as in the outline drawing reproduced in this article.

Gaelic Football

This is, today, one of Ireland's major sports, under the control of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA). A rough kind of football was played in Ireland for many centuries - as was the case in other countries. Gaelic football (which provides excellent all-round activity) was, in some respects, structured by the founders of the GAA as a robust alternative to the "English" games of association football and rugby football. Its rules are still actively evolving and, in truth, now owe little to the football played, of old, on the fields of Ireland.

Hurling and Camogie

Hurling is one of the world's great field games, certainly one of the fastest, and an opportunity to view it should not be missed. It is a robust game, though in the best sense of the word. Persistent fouling is rare, and injuries not as common as spectators, new to the game, might imagine. Hurling, another all-amateur sport under the aegis of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), has its roots in the mists of Irish legend and history, and has cousins in similar curved-stick games in many countries. There are said to have been two types of old-style hurling; one played in the winter with a thin stick, the ball being hit along the ground; and another, mainly in the summer, with a broader stick which led to a more aerial game. These two types of hurling probably had intermediate forms, but the broad stick version is the one developed by the GAA over the last 100 years or so, and it has become Ireland's national sport.

Women play Camogie which, while not being as physical as hurling, is a game similar in many respects. The ladies have their own governing association, though it has close links with the GAA.

Tug of war

This is a universal sport - indeed it was once an Olympic event - though its origins are unclear; possibly from shipboard in the days of sail. Both Ireland and Northern Ireland perform well on the European and World scene as members of the sport's governing body, TWIF. Like road-bowling, it seems to run in families, not so much from generation to generation as in bowling, but at the one time - for example, at present, some seven members of the Kehoe family from Boley, co. Wexford, form the nucleus of the Ireland heavyweight team. Within Ireland, tug-of-war competitions occur at village festivals, agricultural shows, and charity and championship events.

Running and Jumping

The ancient Irish fairs, in particular, the Fair of Tailteann in co. Meath, were the scene of athletic activities and sports. The Tailteann event was a kind of Irish Olympic Games, and people would gather from all over Ireland, and even from Scotland. We complain of traffic congestion today, but, at the last official Fair in 1169 AD, the parked horses and chariots extended some six miles from the events fields. Ireland is not as mountainous as, say, Scotland, so hill races are rarer than in the latter country. Jumping over walls and gates was a popular diversion at the meetings of men at the cross-roads. Running and jumping contests were also practised in fields beside

the wake-house while waiting for the funeral to leave for the grave-yard. Local heroes jumped over rivers, and their names, generations later, are associated with such leaps.

Over the last century in Ireland, athletics became very much part of the debate over nationality, with bitter disputes between rival sporting bodies. In the early stages, this rivalry was between the nationally -inclined 32- county Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) and the Irish Amateur Athletic Association, which had British links. The GAA gave up its athletics responsibilities in 1922 to concentrate on its other sports and the National Athletic and cycling (now cultural) Association of Ireland, also a nationally -inclined body, was entrusted by the GAA with the continuation of the athletics activities started by the GAA in 1884. There is rivalry today between different athletics bodies, but certain compromises have been reached.

Swimming

Swimming in the river Blackwater, or in artificial lakes, was another event in the ancient Tailteann Games. In more recent times, most country districts had their own swimming areas, whether it be in lake or river. Tragically, even in mainly rural Ireland, some of the old bathing spots are now polluted, though the Governments, North and South, have realised this, and some action is being taken.

Horse Riding

The present Irish love of horsemanship has deep roots in the past. The legendary warriors of Ireland raced among themselves, and there are detailed regulations set out in the early law tracts.

Just as the Aenach (Fair of) Tailteann was famous for athletic activities, so was the Aenach colmain or horse racing, under the patronage of the Kings of Leinster, in the area of the present "curragh" of Kildare. In more recent historical times, from the 17th century onwards, racing took place, also, at numerous spots throughout Ireland. These races were at "formal" racetracks - they often took place, also, on the beach or across fields. Horse-riding for pleasure was, of course, always popular.

Tossing the Sheaf

This sport (developed from a normal work-a-day occupation) is now practised on the international scene, with Scandinavians, Australians and the Irish among the world's best. The sheaf may be of rushes, but more often now is an artificial one of an appropriate weight. This is tossed by a two-pronged pitchfork, using strength and timing of a high order, over the adjustable bar of a structure like a giant high-jump stand.

Marbles

I was glad, when visiting Portugal in 1988 for the Vila Real traditional games seminar (Portugal), to see youngsters, both in the north and south of the country, playing at marbles. One never sees it now in Ireland, though, not so long ago, it was a popular cross-roads' activity for the men, as well as boys. Throughout the Irish countryside, there were adaptations of the game using larger stone balls. There were games, possibly similar, with, or without, a stick, played by the legendary heroes of Ireland in their youth.

Road Bowls or Bullets

It is a game once popular in past centuries, in England, Wales and Scotland, as well as in many parts of Ireland. Apart from small isolated pockets elsewhere, and its popularity among some of the travelling people, it is now only enjoyed in counties cork and Armagh. A metal ball is thrown underarm along the public roads, the winner being he, or she, who reaches the finishing line in the fewest throws. The European Games in Bowling (road bowls, lofting and moor bowls) was held near cork city in the south of Ireland in late May 1992. I have found some evidence of road bowling or bullet play; by immigrants in North America.

Shoulder stone

The putting of heavy stones from the shoulder was one of the cross-roads' popular pastimes. Often, a stone was plucked from a convenient dry-stone wall. The old men even tell tales of giants and legendary heroes heaving stones from one county to another, or over the top of a mountain. It was obviously not an appropriate pastime for the "little people" or fairies (their favourite occupations included hurling and horse racing). The athletic Pruntys, or Brontès (the uncles of the novelists), excelled in the throwing of the shoulder stone. As with road or street bowling, the activity appears to have crossed to North America with the early settlers.

Weight Throwing (for Distance and for Height)

There was little standardisation in the strength feats of the past, and chariot wheels, bull-calves, sledge hammers, large stones, metal weights, sets of harness, and cannon balls were among the objects thrown or lifted. Some of the founders and early athletes of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) were active participants in the revival of weight throwing, regarding it as one of the finest of the national pastimes. Nowadays, the GAA'S mantle has fallen on the National Athletic and cultural Association of Ireland (NACAI) and this Association has standardised the competition equipment and rules. A 56lb round weight, attached to a chain and handle, is thrown, one-handed, for distance, or for height.

Handball

Hitting a ball, with either hand, against a wall is a game of some antiquity in Ireland. Any convenient stonework was used, even of castles, abbeys or city walls. From about 300 years ago, it seems that fairly primitive 3-wall ball alleys were built, and their slightly more sophisticated successors can still be seen in country districts, often a little the worse for wear. Similar alleys were constructed in the towns, but were soon demolished as rebuilding and development commenced. Sometimes, crude rackets were used instead of the hands.

Irish schools played an important part in reviving the old game in the 19th century, and this revival was continued by the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), which drew up new rules for handball in the mid-1880s. Handball is still one of the GAA'S sports, though a Handball council has considerable autonomy. Modern handball courts (rather smaller than the old outdoor ones) are under cover, with 4 walls plus the roof being used as a playing surface. Occasionally, a wall may be of glass. This sport is now played in an increasing number of countries, and the next World championships was scheduled for Ireland in 1994.

Horse Shoe Throwing into clay and onto Grass

At least as far back as the 14th century, possibly the 12th century, the Irish appear to have shoed their horses with metal. There is no evidence, however, that these shoes were used for games playing, though there are references to the throwing of "quoits". Now, informally, with old horse shoes, the game is very popular at festivals and similar events throughout Ireland. competitively, it is played with purpose-made shoes, and these are thrown towards a metal stake set in clay, or on grass. The latter, being the more convenient to set up, is the commoner version in Ireland, with counties Kildare (a "horsey" county) and Donegal the leaders.

Steel-Ring Quoits

This game is rather like horse shoe throwing or pitching, and has similar rules, though the missile is a complete metal disc with a large hole in the centre. As these discs had to be specially made, this game does not seem ever to have been as popular in Ireland as horse shoe throwing. As it was never taken as seriously in Ireland as in Britain, the quoits tended to be lighter than the British ones which could be quite massive. There were, in the past, even as far back as the ancient Tailteann Games, references to quoit throwing, but details of play are not given.

Ground quoits solid Disc

This game may have been played with stones in past centuries. Where it still survives in Ireland, lead or heavy rubber discs are thrown into a numbered square or circle, the discs to lie clear of the lines. This is a game played both by adults and by children.

Board Quoits (solid Disc)

This is a kind of portable version of ground quoits. Rubber discs are thrown onto a raised board or box, tilted towards the thrower. The board is marked with numbered circles, and, normally, has a hole in the centre. The game often appears at an outdoor skittles tournament to occupy the players' time between the skittles contests.

Skittles (logs)

In this version of skittles, logs held in the centre are thrown, underarm, towards five skittles set in a square or a circle. More often than not, these skittles (of varying shapes and sizes in different parts of the country) have to be knocked clear of the square or circle for the points to be claimed. The logs (of heavy wood) must land beyond a certain distance from the throwing line. There are now All-Ireland championships with standardised rules and equipment, but, originally, this was the cross-roads game *gar excellence* with local variations in rules and equipment (though the basic features of the game were remarkably standard from county to county).

Skittles (sticks).

This type of skittles appears to be related to the logs version. Once again, there are five skittles in a target area, though the missiles are longish sticks which are held at the end and skimmed along the road, or down an alley. The game is rarely found now in Ireland - it survives only at a

few fairs or festivals (where, however, it draws many participants and spectators). stick throwing at cocks used to be common throughout Britain and Ireland, and this Irish version of skittles may be a more acceptable version of that pastime. It certainly resembles some of the early (14th century) representations of skittles, or club kayles, in the margins of ecclesiastical documents.

THE SYMBOLIC SIGNIFICANCE OF TRADITIONAL SPORTS AND GAMES.

Pre - or postmodernism ? - A cross cultural perspective.

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Introduction

In the discussion of the symbolic meaning of modern sports it might be useful to ask the question, what made traditional sports and games loose or preserve their meaning. Studies of traditional games in different European regions reveal five factors of importance: Industrialization; Sport and Its Organisation; Religion; Cultural Diversity and - Identity; The Bearers of Cultural Initiative.

In particular the bearers of culture seem to be important, and thus this intervention ends up in an analysis of putative trends for the cultural development in modern western society.

1. The Significance of Industrialization.

Traditional games and physical exercises are often seen as having their origin in the pre-industrial rural communities of the 19th century. Folklorists of the previous century had an affection for and made their records from rural surroundings. This corresponds well with the belief today that the ancient games are practised in the periphery of industrialization, in areas, where industrialization has arrived late or has only partly had any impact: Ireland, Scotland, Brittany, Flanders, Portugal. The argument, however is hardly sound: In Spain the largest number of the various ancient athletic sports is found in the Basque country, which is one of its most highly developed industrial regions. In the prosperous region of Northern Italy there is, for example, a games culture in Val d'Aoste and it has been seen in Flanders that the traditional games have survived best in town areas¹. This could be due to the special status held by Flemish towns as commercial centres with an influential "bourgeoisie" and guilds, which have the tradition of being repositories of culture.

Therefore, industrialization cannot be the reason *per se* for the disappearance of the ancient games and physical exercises, and we could ask whether modern sports is just a kind of adjustment, which has always been in existence, but has been accelerated by the rapid development in general.

Disciplines in modern sports, gymnastics and acrobatics can be traced back to traditional sports and agility exercises. The decision whether a game has survived or not, is then a question of what is regarded fundamental for any one game. For example, do "galoche" players from Brittany prefer an asphalt road to a gravel road for their game. This of course ruins the asphalt but it reduces the number of unwanted occurrences in the game². This means that galoche is no longer played on gravel surfaces, although, this does not mean that industrialization has wiped out the game of galoche.

2. Sport and its Organisation

The problem of the transformation of traditional games is, however, more complicated. The games of course can change qualitatively in such a radical way that the question arises whether it is the same game as before. "Boule bretonne plombée" was played in Brittany with wooden balls containing lead to give the desired weight. A growing wish to compete on equal terms, however, resulted in the game "boule syntetique" which is now preferred by more players and has gradually ousted the old game played with wooden balls. Boule syntetique is played with industrially manufactured balls, which are completely identical in form and weight compared to wooden balls that are liable to become battered and worn³. However, in the game of "boule bretonne" it is part of the game to be able to evaluate how the wear and tear and uneven weight distribution influence the direction of the ball. The great uncertainty and chance contingencies are looked on as fundamental for the game.

The changes, which ensure absolute equality at the start and eliminate the element of chance in the game, with the view to achieving maximum fairness, are qualitative changes of the game. These phenomena, which accompany industrialisation we call the "the process of sportification". Boule syntetique is not "the same" game as "boule bretonne". Therefore, we can establish that "sportification" has almost wiped out the game of boule bretonne.

Many disciplines in modern sport can be traced through a history of transformation back to their roots in traditional physical exercises and games, although only a few identify pole vaulting, shot-putting, weight-lifting, throwing the hammer, hockey etc. with traditional sports. The transformation which these activities have undergone is so radical that they apparently can no longer be regarded as "the same".

Another kind of "sportification" follows when the organisation of a game starts to engulf large geographic areas in which a given game has been practised in different variations in different local communities. In Guarda, Portugal, the local district committee wanted to encourage interest in the ancient games⁴. The committee tried to arrange tournaments between the different villages and so had to standardise the rules for play and for the requisites used. In addition they had to divide the players into permanent teams with the same level of proficiency and arrange fixed training hours. On one hand, this can be seen as a way of keeping

the traditional games alive, and on the other hand, it can be regarded as an act of destruction.

In the Basque country, at least eleven forms of pelota can be found, and there is a strong desire to encourage these games. One method of doing this is to have pelota recognized as an Olympic discipline, and due to the progress of this strategy, pelota was shown at the Olympics in Barcelona as another possible sport for future Olympics⁵. The result of a successful promotion would probably be the recognition of only one form, which would threaten the ten domestic forms of pelota with obscurity. There are expectations, however, that sports should not be only about achievement but primarily through playfulness lead to pleasure and physical well-being. This interest to some extent has led to a "reludofication" of sport, which has resulted in a wealth of new activities (anything is possible) and at the same time given rise to the interest for the ancient games, who are experiencing a renaissance.

3. Religion

It has been shown that Protestantism and Protestant ethic with its waves of Pietism and Puritanism is a good bed of growth for sport⁶. The opportunity to achieve happiness and salvation through hard work, diligence, asceticism and competition are all functional norms whether we refer to Protestantism, liberalism or sport. A look at the distribution of areas with a vital culture for the ancient games, on the contrary will show us that Protestantism is too puritanical to accept the sensuous raciness so often connected with traditional sports, whether we are talking for instance about wrestling or games of strength, or the culture of betting, drinking, flirtation and other forms of immoral behaviour connected with the above. A look at the history of traditional games will show that they have continually found themselves at loggerheads or on the wrong side of Protestant morals and codes for decency. Conversely, there are more reminiscences of a games' culture in the Catholic areas than in the Protestant areas. Thus, religion is the likely explanation why more games have survived in the Catholic Flanders than in the Protestant Holland, even though the two countries are neighbours and speak the same language.

4. Cultural Diversity and Cultural Identity.

Clearly the concepts of cultural diversity and identity plays an important part in the discussion of the survival possibilities of the ancient games. It is striking that the games' survival possibilities increase in areas where the population is struggling to keep their culture alive. This could be in an island community or a community in a periphery area of rugged nature where the population is dependent on a single industry for its existence. In these areas the drama of life is still man's fight to rise above the forces of nature through customs and traditions. The struggle in other areas is the struggle between different cultures, one trying to advance to the detriment of the other. This could be between minorities who feel their regional or

sub-national identity threatened, due to the larger nation state of which they are a part⁷.

In such areas traditions are more than just museum pieces of folklore, taken out and dusted for the benefit of tourists or for the state to show off on official visits. Here, the folklore is strongly political and closely connected to the struggle for survival as a whole people, and without doubt, the number of regions where this type of cultural struggle exists, are growing. It is in connection with such endeavours that the traditional sports and games are found as objects of identification in the sub-national creation of an identity. This undoubtedly plays an important rôle for the survival of ancient games in for example Scotland, Brittany, the Basque country, Val d'Aoste, and presumably the reawakened interest in the ancient games that can be seen everywhere, is a symptom of the fact that Western Europe increasingly feels the lack of cultural anchorage.

5. Bearers of Cultural Initiative.

In many areas it is not any longer (or not only) a rural community, which acts as agents of tradition, ensuring survival of the ancient games, but also intellectuals, professional people and civil servants who attempt to keep local culture alive and with it the ancient games. This phenomenon is perhaps the most important point in the discussion on revitalisation and the possibilities of survival of the traditional games' culture. The basis for this kind of thesis is the tendency for crisis in the Western civilisation also called the modernity crisis⁸.

'Modernity' refers to the epoch in which reason is regarded as the most important principle, enlightenment the most valuable project, science the highest institute in the question of truth, and progress the very end. On the road of progress, however, many problems seem to appear, and there is a general lack of belief in economics and technology as a way of producing us out of these problems - in science as a way of thinking us out of them, and in politics as a way of negotiating us out. Therefore, the modernity crisis is a crisis of reason, - of information, - of moral standards, as scientific truth is restricted to the relation between facts and methods, - and of the belief in progress.

This appears to give rise to at least three different basic reactions, all with "body cultural" implications and probably in accordance with the "habitus" of specific population segments.

Firstly: - A barbaric reaction, which is a consequence of the growing number of poverty-stricken people in society today. An impoverishment caused by the fact that while the majority of the population is improving their material standard of living, there is a mechanisation and intensification of labour conditions in process throwing about one third of the population out of the labour market as unsuitable. In this group we find the superfluous generations, without hope and a future, left to the expediences and mercy of the social institutions, or left to survive as best they

can in the cities where the law of the jungle prevails. These groups are predominantly self-destructive physically, expressing themselves through different forms of abuse, and/or through crime, gang wars and riots. Whether they regard themselves as right or left wing is irrelevant, as they do no longer worry much about cogent goals, ideology or other forms of justification. In his essay "Aussichten auf den Bürgerkrieg" H.M. Enzensberger has described this phenomenon in more detail⁹. He states that the anatomy of civil war consists in the individual not meeting any form for acceptance and approval, which gives expression to hate and self-hatred. The situation is global to the same extent as are the Western values, unemployment and the superfluity of individuals. The Barbaric reaction rounds off modernism and can be regarded as its negative side, the flow of capital from the Western centres in direction of the Oriental tigers as its dynamics, and modern competitive sport as its most admired side, but we can glimpse barbaric abuse and contempt of the body in its perverted forms.

Secondly: - A neo-naturalist reaction which can be interpreted as a withdrawal from a mutually dependent cultural discourse to a bodily orientated naturalism, with balance or resourcefulness as ideals. The withdrawal takes on various and contradictory forms, one of which can be characterised as the "New age" syndrome and another as "Action man" syndrome.

The "New age" syndrome is the most philosophical of the two and contains a scepticism towards the possibilities of the positivist science in understanding nature as a whole. It contains a reference to holistic principles, with rather an ambiguous universal energy concept as the common denominator for the material as well as the spiritual side of life¹⁰. In addition there are frequent references to the theory of complementarity as an argument that science is unable to distinguish between mind and matter. The energy concept is often supplemented with a psychoanalytical argumentation in which the idea of letting the original and unconscious forces of the Freudian "id" manifest themselves harmoniously and in complete accord with nature. The concept leads to respect for "nature", - ecological views, - care of the body, its balance and energies, its healing, health, and nutrition - respect for original, "primitive" wisdom, exotic practices as Oriental physical exercises, from meditation to martial arts and other kinds of self controlling behaviour, often combined with fragments of Hinduism or Buddhism.

The "Action man" syndrome contains an extreme individualism, in which the body's form, its training, strengthening and staying power are central elements (if you cannot trust anything else, you must be able to trust your own body). Science and technology are used partly as a means of effective and controlled bodyshaping, and partly in the manipulation of the outside world in order to create growing experience potential and also to strengthen the individual's opportunity to command the outside world. Sociobiological theories are prevalent as implied theories on human behaviour. Practices connected with the body range from fitness and bodyshaping under the influence of medicines thought to have the

desired effect - to life in the open air, fun sports with technical aids that can potentiate the experience, high risk activities with the use of the most advanced equipment to avoid the potential catastrophe, which is a necessary dimension of the desired object, "the ultimate experience".

Like no inner point is unknown to the "New age" generation, no outer point is inaccessible for the "Action man", together they occupy and monopolise the essence of nature.

Thirdly: - A spiritualistic reaction that moreover, can be described as having two diametrical variations: a fundamentalist and a traditionalist one.

The fundamentalist variation searches for a basis for social norms and values in texts of religious character. The basis is the existence of absolute truth. It is revealed, holy and above any discussion or criticism. The criterion for its validity is faith, and the believers have a true duty to live by, defend and spread the word. With the basis in this sort of code it is possible to distinguish between clean and unclean, the true believers - disbelievers, the redeemed, the unredeemed, thus there is a basis for totalitarianism. Body practices are concentrated on rituals or on training to fight for the "good cause".

The traditionalist variation rejects the alienation of town life and the materialistic attitude to life, and applies itself to the revival of concrete human relationships such as family values and contact with neighbours. It replaces commercial events with the traditional society's rituals, celebrations and festivals and as an answer to the question of life the emphasis is put on history and mythology. The followers of this variation are very involved in local politics where behind the slogan "the good life" they work towards a high degree of self-determination. They evaluate highly, as the bodily part of this revitalisation, the non-alienated production of utility values. They prefer to be self-sufficient, supports collective production and enjoy communal meals. They talk about the necessity of a reinforcement of moral standards, and they think folk dancing and the traditional games sound exciting on festive occasions and festivals but feel more secure with Jazz music. In their praise of the quiet life in idyllic rural surroundings with sheep, hens and geese they might have dropped their career and the "rat race", they are environmentally aware and aim for perpetual forms of energy, ecological farming methods, self-sufficiency, re-cycling and reduced use of resources. - Unfortunately they haven't got space enough for all, and also time seems to work against them.

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TRADITIONAL GAMES IN FLANDERS: state of the art

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Introduction: the roots of a long playful tradition

Works of miniaturists as Simon Bening (1483-1561) or Gerard Horenbout (1465-1541) and painters like Pieter Bruegel the Elder (ca. 1525-1569) and David Teniers the Younger (1610-1690) give evidence of the rich variety of traditional games in Flanders at the time. Besides these iconographic documents from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century, little written information is available about the early history of traditional games. There are some illustrations in the margins of manuscripts from the thirteenth and the fifteenth century (Randall 1966, De Vroede 1998) and several city bans from the same period (Geerts 1987), but they tell us almost nothing about how these games went on and in which circumstances they were practised. Chroniclers did not pay much attention to the social life and the activities of the ordinary people, neither did historians until a few decades ago. Nevertheless we know that centuries ago a whole range of ball games, bowling and shooting games as well as throwing games were practised in Flanders. Flanders is the northern part of Belgium where Dutch is spoken. With its six million (60% of the global population) inhabitants for 13.500 km² Flanders is one of most densely populated (441/km²) regions in the world.

Studying traditional games: taking play seriously

After 1850 some publications on traditional games started to appear and after 1900 more and more journals of folklore and local history published articles about traditional games. Although there exists a large amount of such publications, they are often purely descriptive and have little social or cultural relevance. Most of these local folklore contributions are very short and the majority of them is devoted to children's games. Historians paid a lot of attention to the traditions of the archery and crossbow guilds of the cities and the villages of which Renson (1976) gave a review. Whereas the shooting activities of these guildsmen are well documented, other traditional games practised nowadays like *meetschieten*, *pagschieten* and *ringwerpen* left no written historical trace at all. Like oral history, they are ludic history, just there, handed over from one generation to the other.

When the research project of the *Flemish Folk Games File* (FFGF) was launched in 1973 (Renson & Smulders 1981) at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Faculty

of Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Sciences) the researchers could not rely much on existing information neither for the history, nor for the actual situation of traditional games in Flanders. As part of their course work in sport history, students were stimulated to carry out field work. They were given the assignment to write a paper on a traditional game, which was still actively practised in their own community. Over the years this investigation resulted in 1500 files on local associations of traditional games throughout Flanders. The rich variety of the traditional games scene in Flanders has been studied and analysed by means of about 50 master theses and one doctoral thesis (Smulders 1982: 218-220). Parallel to this survey research, a bibliography of traditional games in Flanders has been compiled (De Vroede 1979). Additional information has been systematically gathered and the existing files have been updated. Furthermore, the socio-cultural profile of the practitioners of folk games in Flanders was analysed around 1988 (Renson e.a. 1997).

The most striking result of the research project was the rich variety of traditional games still actively practised in Flanders. Some of these games were completely unknown to the research team. Other games, which were believed to have died out, were found to be still 'alive and kicking'. Moreover, several games were still very popular on a local scale, but completely absent in other parts of the region. All over, about sixty different games have been identified which can be considered as a remarkable amount for a small region like Flanders.

Sociogeographical aspects of traditional games

An analysis of the data allowed Renson and Smulders (1981: 104-105) to draw up some conclusions upon the aspect of their geographical distribution. A limited number of traditional games is practised in all the five Flemish provinces. These are popinjay shooting (vertical and horizontal), cross bow shooting, pigeon racing and finch warbling contests. Most of the traditional games however are practised regionally, some of them also played in the adjacent regions in France, Germany, The Netherlands and Wallonia, the French speaking part of Belgium. The game of *beugelen* (closh) is practised in a small area in the Northern part of the province of Limburg as well as in the Dutch province of Limburg and in one location in Germany. The same goes for *kaatsen* (hand tennis), played in some areas of the provinces of East-Flanders, Brabant and Antwerp, but especially widely spread in the Walloon part of Belgium. Sometimes games are practised only in isolated pocket like *pagschieten* (bludgeon throwing) in Alken (Province of Limburg) and *javelot* (throwing the dart) in Wijtschate (Province of West-Flanders).

It is remarkable that traditional games of the same category tend to exclude each other spatially (Smulders 1982). One will for instance not find two different types of bowling games in the same area. Most of the traditional games seem to cluster together in their own territory and keep out 'intruders' of a variant games species.

Socio-cultural profile of the participants

Apart from some 'eye catching' infrastructure like the 28 m high poles needed for popinjay shooting, traditional games are not very visible. Mostly the activities take place at the local pub in a separate room or in the backyard, away from the 'madding crowd'. The people practising these games belong moreover to the lower socio-cultural classes which partly explains the rather old fashioned or 'primitive' image of traditional games. Based on the data (for the period 1973-1988) provided by the FFGF, the socio-cultural profile of the participants has been examined (Renson e.a. 1997). The data were analysed according to age, gender, socio-professional status and degree of urbanisation of the participants. Though the results showed some variety between the different disciplines of traditional games, they confirmed the stereotype that the traditional games participant is indeed an elderly male of the working-class who lives mainly on the countryside. Now, about fifteen years later, this specific socio-cultural profile has been reinforced by the results of a recent survey research (conducted by Renson & De Vroede 2002-2005, not yet published). The average age of 45 year in the 1988 survey has increased to the age of 48 and the already low social status of the participants has even decreased furthermore. Also the degree of urbanisation has decreased which means that traditional games are becoming more and more a rural affair. However, it is not all doom and gloom, because - compared to fifteen years ago- the degree of female participation has increased from 11% to 22%.

Organisational aspects / Federations of traditional games

The organisational structure of traditional games shows a wide variety in structures, especially with regard to the category of shooting games. For each shooting discipline there is a federation but at the same time there are umbrella federations which coordinate associations from different shooting disciplines. The fact that some associations or historical guilds are member of several federations makes it even more complicated. Roughly outlined, one can speak of two factions: on the one hand the federations (*Koninklijke Nationale Belgische Bond der Wipschutters*, °1908, and the *Vlaams Boogsportfederatie Liggende Wip*, ° 1972) which focus more on the competitive aspects, at the other hand the federations (most of them under the umbrella of the *Federatie van Vlaamse Historische Schuttersgilden*, °2000; a minor part of the guilds under the *Hoge Gilderaad der Kempen*, °1952) which stress the importance of the historical and cultural heritage.

Nowadays most of the traditional games have their own federation. For many of them though these coordinating organisms were quite recently established. Some of them are well organised, others are very informal networks where only some ad hoc agreements are made concerning the calendar of their competitions.

From Flemish Traditional Games Centre (Vlaamse Volkssportcentrale) to Centre for Sport Culture (Sportimonium)

As a spin-off of the afore mentioned research project of the Flemish Folk Games File the Vlaamse Volkssportcentrale (Flemish Traditional Games Centre) was established in 1980 to study and promote traditional games. Partners in the non profit organisation were the Faculty of Physical Education (now Kinesiology) of Leuven University, the sport department of the Flemish government (Blosso) and the Open-air Museum Bokrijk, which focuses on traditional culture. The VVC is subsidised by the department of culture of the Flemish Community.

Research on traditional games was carried out by the research unit for Socio-cultural Kinesiology (KULeuven). Together with the VVC, a specialised documentation centre on traditional games (both regional and world-wide) was established. The thus acquired information, background knowledge and practical know-how is provided to the public via different kinds of publications, lectures and workshops. Important in this respect is that most colleges and universities involved in the formation of kinesiologists and/or physical education teachers call upon the VVC for training them in the art and skills of traditional games.

In order to make traditional games more visible and better known, and to offer people the opportunity to practise them, the VVC manages a network of regionally dispersed loan services which have been very successful from the beginning. Another means for promoting traditional games has been the creation of 'Traditional games routes'. These routes lead the tourists to a number of places, mostly local pubs, where typical games can be played while enjoying a local beer. Fourteen of such 'routes' leading to the roots of our play heritage, are described in brochures, distributed by local tourist centres.

A wandering exhibition on traditional games has toured during two years through the country and was exhibited in many cities. Afterwards a concise version of this exhibition has been put at the disposal of the public to provide background information at the occasion of traditional games festivals. Since the Sport Museum Flanders has been opened in 2004 under the name of Sportimonium (a contraction of the terms Sport and Patrimonium), a special section in the permanent exhibition is devoted to traditional games. Part of the Sportimonium project is the Traditional Games Park, to be opened in June 2006, where the visitors can learn how to master the skills and to enjoy the pleasures of the traditional games heritage.

After twenty-five years of existence, the board of the VVC has decided in the beginning of 2006 to change its name into Centrum voor Sportcultuur (Centre for Sports Culture). Although a strong emphasis on traditional games will remain, the new name of the organisation reflects better the full scope and mission of the (former) VVC, which has gradually broadened its interest over the years to the social and cultural aspects of 'movement culture' in general, encompassing games, gymnastics, competitive sports and dance expression.

The Federation of Flemish Traditional Sports (Vlaamse Traditionele Sporten: VlaS)

As a result of its activities, the VVC established over the years close contacts with many practitioners and clubs of traditional games. One of the particularities of traditional games in Flanders is that most of them are practised in restricted areas and that their practitioners used to have little or no contact with each other, even though they are faced with similar problems. Each of these clubs and their federations (if existing) are too small to be heard on the wider community level and they do not meet the criteria for being subsidised as is the case for modern sports. The VVC was instrumental in helping these 'Cinderellas' of the Flemish sports scene to establish contacts with each other and to found an umbrella organisation of their own. This resulted in 1988 in the creation of the Traditional Games Confederation (VOSCO), since 2001 renamed as *Vlaamse Traditionele Sporten* (VlaS). This confederation originally consisted only of two small federations and the VVC, and counted only 500 members. The organisation grew steadily and in 1990 the confederation was recognised and subsidised by the Flemish sports department and could establish its own secretariat and hire two administrators to support the affiliated federations and clubs. Today VlaS acts as an umbrella organisation for 23 types of traditional games and counts about 12.500 members.

Although the CSC (the former VVC) and VlaS are both concerned with the preservation and promotion of traditional games, they have each their specific tasks. While the CSC focuses on ethnographic, historical and socio-cultural aspects of movement culture in Flanders, VlaS concentrates on administrative, managerial and sport technical support for its members.

The last two decades have been difficult for the traditional games. Though a lot of promotion actions have been carried out to give traditional games more visibility, to support the associations and to emphasize the values of traditional games, the practice of traditional games has been constantly declining. Also the number of associations and the number of members per association has shown a drastic decrease. Some games have disappeared almost completely. This doom scenario has affected most those games which failed to organise themselves in a broader network, as was the case for games like pierbol, struifwerpen, ronde bol, schuiftafel.... On the other end, it appears that the remaining associations are today better organised, not only externally through their linkage with federations, but also internally, moreover they have developed stronger ties with the municipal authorities and local cultural organisations.

4. Traditional games and sports in Flanders: an inventory

The rich variety of traditional games in Flanders was already mentioned. Here follow a brief overview in which they are categorised according to the typology initially drawn up for Flanders (Renson & Smulders 1981) and later on slightly adapted for use on a European scale (Renson e.a. 1991). Only games played on a

regular basis are included. Games which are only occasionally practised during a yearly festival or fair, are not included in this overview, neither are traditional children's games.

Ball games

Among the traditional ball games *kaatsen* (pelote) is the only one to survive. It is played by two teams of five players each. Although it was once considered as the national ball sport in Belgium before World War One (De Borger 1981) and it still is a highly institutionalised competitive game, *kaatsen* is more and more in decline.

Bowling and skittle games

In Flanders, mainly in the provinces of East- and West-Flanders a great variety of traditional bowling games is observed. Most popular is *krulbol* (curl bowls) with approximately 2500 players. It is not easy to give exact numbers because not all associations are member of the two existing federations. Other more or less popular bowling games are *trabolling* with its typical hollow alley and *gaaibol* ('jays' or blocks at the end of a sloping alley have to be knocked down by bowls). The other bowling games like *pierbol* and *trou-madame* are in firm decline and *rondebol* and *vloerbol* have almost died out during the last two decades.

Still popular are the different types of skittle games in the provinces of Brabant and Antwerpen. Commonly it is played with nine skittles but the alleys differ from region to region. In one particular game of skittles (*vlugbaankegelen*) the heavy bowl used to be thrown at the skittles instead of rolling the bowl. This type of skittles game has disappeared almost completely. The last bowling game to be mentioned is *beugelen* (cosh), to be considered as the precursor of modern billiards, is still practised by a couple of hundreds of players in a small area in the north east of the country.

In two more games skittles are used, i.e. *toptafel* (top table) and *tafelkegelen* (table skittles). Both of them are played indoors. In the first one a top is launched in a wooden box in order to knock down the small skittles, in the second one the skittles have to be knocked down by a small wooden ball tethered by a rope to a swivel on top of a pole fixed to the table.

In *sjoelbak* (shovelboard) and *schuiftafel* (shovel table) small discs are shovelled. In *schuiftafel* iron discs are struck with a billiard cue to an iron stake at the end of the wooden table, in *sjoelbak* wooden discs are shovelled to small gates at the end of the table.

Throwing games

Most popular type in this category are throwing games with discs like *meetschieten* (throwing at a line marked on the ground), *stopschieten* (throwing at a little stake), *struifwerpen* (throwing at lines in a box filled with clay), *tonspel* (throwing at a number of hole in a wooden board) and *pudebak* (similar to *tonspel* but with a toad as a typical ornament). Furthermore there are *vogelpik* (kind of darts), *pagschieten* (bludgeon throwing) and *javelot* (a heavy dart is thrown underarm to the butt).

Perhaps the most spectacular throwing game is *struifvogel* in which a big wooden bird, hung up from a wire fixed to the ceiling, is launched at the butt with a dart in its beak.

Shooting games

Archery has a long standing tradition in Flanders. Some of these guilds can trace back their origin to the fourteenth century. Like in many European countries, most cities had from the beginning of the fourteenth century onwards their crossbow and longbow guilds, and later on their culverin guilds too. They inspired the village people in Flanders to establish their own guilds. Although their importance as a military force decreased, they remained important in social life (Renson 1976). The traditional shooting with the crossbow, longbow and culverin at both the vertical pole (popinjay shooting) and at the butts survived all the political turmoil and at this moment still hundreds of shooting guilds are flourishing in Flanders. In the course of the years new disciplines were added as for instance *liggende-wipschieten* or shooting at the horizontal rake with fixed (popin)jays, catapult shooting, *klepschieten* (carbine shooting at an iron target on top of a pole), *buksschieten* (culverin shooting at small wooden blocks on top of a pole), rifle shooting at (empty) bottles. Most popular are *staande-wipschieten* or popinjay shooting with a long bow at the rake with 'jays' fixed on top of a tall vertical pole and *liggende-wipschieten*, already described, with respectively about 8.000 and 3.500 archers.

Fighting and tilting games

Apart from tug-of-war there exists no other traditional fighting game. Ring tilting is practised on a bike in some villages near the city of Bruges. Horse riders organize their own ring tilting occasionally.

Animal Games

Pigeon races and finch warbling contests are very popular in Flanders. Although there are still about 40.000 pigeon fanciers nowadays, the game is in decline and the number of members of the Royal Belgian Pigeon Racing Federation steadily decreases. The same holds true for the amateurs of finch warbling though their decline is less striking. The General Finch Warbling Federation has in 2006 13.500 members. De '*vinkenzetters*' or members of the finch warbling federation, mainly concentrated in the provinces of East- and West-Flanders, train their finches to sing a particular melody which the birds have to sing as many times as possible during the one hour lasting contest.

Similar to finch warbling is *hanenzingen* (cock crowing). The aim of this game is to guess in advance how many times a cock will crow in a certain time period. *Gansrijden* is practised by the riders of Belgian horses, who try to pull off the head of a – nowadays a dead - goose, which hangs from a gallows. *Hanenkappen* (cutting off the head of a cock hanging upwards down) and the survival of the illegal game of cock fighting should both be mentioned from an ethnographic point of view. *Gansrijden* takes only place in the period around Withsuntide in a few

villages, while *hanenkappen* almost died out. No need to say that these 'remnants' of cruel amusements were not incorporated in the promotion campaigns described before.

Locomotion games

The only game to mention in this category is stilt walking which is practised by only by one association (Steltenlopers van Merchtem). In fact this group is to be considered as a mere demonstration group with spectacular performances on high stilts.

Flemish traditional games or traditional games in Flanders?

If we compare the traditional games practised in Flanders to the traditional games scene in Europe we observe both many similarities and particularities. Kaatsen, the only ballgame in Flanders - in fact in Belgium as the majority of the players are to be found in the Walloon region -, shares its historical origin with the many other pelota-games in France, Italy, Spain, The Netherlands or Sweden. Flanders has skittles games and bowl games in common with many European countries. In the category of throwing games however we observe some particular games like *struifvogel* and *struifwerpen* which are nowadays not observed elsewhere.

Most striking however is the variety and popularity of shooting games. Though archery, crossbow and culverin guilds which practised popinjay shooting, did exist centuries ago in many other countries like Austria, France, Germany, Poland, ...this tradition remained particularly popular in Flanders and the adjacent regions, where even new shooting disciplines were added. Also striking is that there exist no traditional fighting or wrestling games in Flanders.

As to the nature of the traditional games in general one can notice some peculiarities for Flanders where traditional games are not athletic at all. Strength is never involved (except for tug-of-war); what matters is accuracy. For the throwing games the average distance is only three metres. If the distance to the target exceeds more than three meters (except for *pagschieten*), longbows, crossbows or catapults are brought in to do the work. Neither endurance nor speed are an issue. So, in contrast to many regions, Flemish people do not run for distance or speed nor leap in their traditional games. They tend more to a co-operative or co-acting model. Indeed, a lot of bowl games and shooting games are played in teams. The Flemish traditional games players like to play indoors – preferably in the cosy atmosphere of a local pub - where conviviality is important. In this way, it is not surprising that traditional wrestling does not appear. Also striking, with regard to the formal-structural characteristics of the games, is the observation that the Flemings 'gamesters' are always bowling, throwing and shooting to fixed targets and not for distance (De Vroede & Renson 2004).

Conclusions: traditions as challenges for the future

When the VVC started in 1980 its promotion campaign for traditional games it could reckon upon the Flemish government in the framework of the 'sports-for-all'-policy. The year 1981-1982 was even proclaimed as 'The year of traditional games'. In 1990 the confederation of traditional games (VlaS) was recognised and subsidised since then by the sports department of the Flemish Community. But the governmental strategy changed. The Flemish sports department argued in the late nineties that not enough physical effort was involved in practising traditional games. Based on this rather arbitrarily 'physiological' parameter, the department stopped its financial support for the confederation, not taking into consideration the beneficial social values and the unique opportunities which traditional games can offer to the elderly people, to social underprivileged or the disabled people. The Flemish Traditional Games Centre (VVC) and the Traditional Games Confederation (VOSCO) tried to turn the tide and launched a protest action, which even led to a public debate in the Flemish Parliament. The so called sports decision-makers reconsidered their decision and offered a (less favourable) alternative which is still valid. VOSCO changed its name to VlaS.

While traditional games were thus abdicated by the apostles of the modern competitive sports, the interest for popular culture in general and for traditional games in particular grew almost simultaneously and a decree was adopted in 1998 to support the field of popular, often intangible, heritage. The appreciation reached an apogee in 2005 when the Flemish government nominated in 2005 the traditional games, with popinjay shooting as a *pars pro toto*, as the Belgian candidature for the UNESCO World List of Intangible Heritage.

Physiological arguments, which were used against traditional games, can be used in their defence and rely on the outcome of a wide scale epidemiological study, carried out among elderly citizens (Glass e.a. 1999). The results of this population study showed the beneficial effects of social activities such as traditional games, which lower the risk of all cause mortality as much as fitness activities do. They also have a strong impact on the psychological and social quality of life. To many people these games are a convivial way to spend their leisure time and to keep fit and active until high age. Moreover, traditional games offer opportunities to get together and to have social contacts with each other. In modern times of growing individualisation these traditional games, which have a low threshold and where every spectator is a potential participant - are a valuable asset.

We should also safeguard the rich *ludodiversity* of our play heritage. The importance of keeping our games alive and highly diversified, instead of narrowing them down to a small number of strictly codified modern sports, may - culturally speaking - be as important as keeping our ecosystem diversified. Biodiversity is threatened by 'overhunting', by the introduction of certain species to places where they didn't previously occur, by habitat destruction and by a ripple effect in which - like branching rows of dominos - the extermination of one species may lead to the loss of others (Diamond 1992). *Mutatis mutandi*, these same mechanisms can be observed in the extinction of our ludic culture of traditional games. Some were

indeed overhunted or were –in other terms- simply 'forbidden' by the clergy or political authorities because of their often wild or boisterous character. Many traditional games disappeared through the introduction and promotion of foreign - mostly British or American sports and games- into school playgrounds which had their own 'playlore'. The same holds true for the destruction of the habitats where traditional games were played: the old pubs, the streets and squares from our cities and villages, which are now replaced by parking lots or sold to so called 'city developers'. The domino or chain effect can also be observed and has made these traditional games endangered games species, which risk to become museum rarities if we find no solution to (re)integrate them in the ludic culture of our youngsters and protect their habitats for our greying society (Renson 2004).

Traditional games can certainly appeal en benefit to many groups in society. That is why traditional games deserve explicit attention from society and from the local and national authorities. It remains however important to bear in mind that traditional games are a living heritage and not a 'frozen' reality or romantic nostalgia. They have to keep up with the times, but without losing their idiosyncrasy.

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THE DEVELOPEMENT OF A TRADITIONAL SPORT AT AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

One example : the Gouren in the countries of Western Europe

Guy Jaouen, Brittany

Introduction

The birth of the idea : Gouren is a wrestling style which is proven to have existed in Brittany since the 14th century. According to recent studies it is the result of intermingling of the style of the British isles (Cornwall-Devon and Ireland) and a local Armorican style of the early Middle Ages.

This sport enjoyed periods of strength until the 17th century as it was the national sport of everybody, peasants, nobles and priests alike. Afterwards, times were more difficult, particularly because of the three most important turning points in the history of breton society: 1) the 1789 revolution which brought about a brutal rejection of what was considered customs of the ancient regime, 2) the first world war when many wrestlers were slaughtered during the war and others rejected rural society on their return, 3) the period after World War ii when everything from abroad was considered superior to what was available at home. These remarks are without doubt true of traditional games in general.

Nevertheless, Gouren survived these events and after a relatively prosperous period during the second half of the 19th century, the first governing federation of Gouren was formed in 1930. But already around 1905-10 an attempt had been made to organise this sport, no doubt partly due to the general move towards restructuration of all the modern sports which was fashionable at the time. However, this attempt came to nothing as the 1914-18 war shattered the enthusiasm of its members who were mainly involved in the town' Scaer committee.

This federation, formed in 1930, was the FALSAB. A novel feature was that its leadership came not only from representatives of the organising committees of wrestling championships, but also from representatives of the sport itself. It is comparable in this respect to the Cumberland and Westmoreland Wrestling Association and the Cornish Wrestling Association, federations of traditional

wrestling in the north of England and Cornwall which still follow this principle. The C.W.W.A. was formed in 1907, and the C.W.A. in 1923.

FALSAB led the sport until 1979. In 1965, a second association was formed to help Gouren evolve in line with the reality of modern sports. These two bodies were amalgamated in 1980 to become the "Fédération de Gouren" which had the aim of radically reforming the administrative and technical policies without in any way affecting the historical rules. The 1980 congress also decided that the old FALSAB would henceforth be a Confederation, composed of the F.N.S.A.B. (national Breton Federation of Athletic Sports) and the Federation of Gouren. The Federation of Gouren's first step was to demand in 1981 the status of governing federation by requesting the Ministry of Youth and Sports to grant delegation of its authority and thus officially recognise the federation. Unfortunately, a decree passed in 1954 had granted the French Wrestling Federation (FFL) authority over all wrestling styles practised in France. The Federation of Gouren was essentially and had little influence over France, and the administrative battle was quickly lost due to the intransigence of the ministry and the National Olympic and Sporting Committee (1984). However, this administrative hold-up which caused numerous structural and financial difficulties did not prevent the leaders of Gouren from formulating another strategy for development of the sport.

After numerous trips I organised to Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, the north of England and Scotland, the first international Celtic wrestling course was held in Brittany in 1985. This historical cultural and sporting event is still celebrated in Brittany or elsewhere and is a melting-pot for many new ideas, such as the first European gathering of traditional sports and games, held in Carhaix, Brittany in 1990.

Furthermore, the FILC (International Federation of Celtic Wrestling) was founded in Cardiff in 1985, something which was unthinkable a few years ago. Its objective was to help promote the different styles of Celtic wrestling, i.e. Cornish wrestling (similar to the old Irish style), Back-Hold (from Scotland, the north of England and an old style from Iceland), and Gouren from Brittany. The FILC organised in 1986 the first international championship of Celtic Wrestling which was, after 1991, given the name of European Championship.

Gouren thus unconsciously circumvented any political and administrative problems as it had gained acceptance at an international level. As an ambassador for Brittany in many European capitals it was in a favourable position for negotiating with the media and local communities.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOUREN IN WESTERN EUROPE

In 1985, the Federation of Gouren, with the support of the FILC initiated the creation of "sister federations" abroad. A commission for international relations was set up which organises every year 10-15 foreign exchanges, promotional tours, meetings and competitions. This led to the creation in 1985 of a club in

Wales through contact with a youth organisation for Welsh language teaching. Our presence in Friesland in 1985 at the first Olympic games of European stateless nations also provided us with contacts to form a club in Leeuwarden. One of our coaches even went to live there between 1987 and 1991, returning to become the first permanent trainer of the Federation of Gouren. It is worth mention that the Fryslan Gouren Lyons, the frisian federation, organised the International Ermine Trophy competition in November 1995 in which 5 teams competed.

At the other extreme of western Europe, in Ireland, a federation was also founded very early (1988). It began under the auspices of a youth organisation for the teaching of Irish, but became autonomous in 1991. A coach from Brittany went to live there for two and a half years.

The FILC today work with eleven federations from European regions or countries, from Iceland to the Canaries Islands, Sardinia to Sweden. To gain membership, *an organisation must be the acknowledged body responsible for, or involved with, at least one specific style of Celtic wrestling, in the respective country, or a cultural or linguistic area*, the notion of "state" being irrelevant.

This story about the Gouren could be replaced by the one of the Back Hold which is living something similar actually.

New opportunities for traditional wrestling styles within the framework of traditional games network

The situation of traditional games and wrestling styles has changed little until now, the dawn of the 21st century. They are among the group of sporting activities which the sporting movement forgot during the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. Why is this ? it is difficult to give a precise answer because there are many different cases. The only common denominator appears to be that during the transformation of games into modern sports, these games were either very rural traditional activities, belonged to cultural or linguistic minorities or came from isolated countries or regions such as mountainous area, peninsulas or islands. In fact, the activities often had a combination of these characteristics.

Today, there are two types of traditional games :

1. Those which are organised rather like ordinary sports federations, codified with precise rules, but which are not officially recognised at an international level (either at a sporting or a cultural level). These might be called "cultural sports" : Irish Hurling, Gaelic Football, Basque Pelota, Tsan, Fiolet, several Flemish games, Breton Boules, Galoche Bigoudène, Gouren, etc.

2. Those which have remained unorganised games, without an organisational structure. Unfortunately some of these are currently threatened with extinction.

Nevertheless, with the high level crisis currently experienced by some modern sports, it appears that traditional games and sports will have their role to play, particularly in schools, because of the **authenticity** which they have preserved. This new role could be played alongside or in parallel to modern sports and indeed sometimes only at a cultural and social level. For this to happen, the Federations and Committees must be wary of following in the footsteps of modern sports federations, because of the risk of losing their soul. In the modern world, their asset is their **difference** and if they lose this, they risk losing the public's interest also.

The turn of the century will therefore also be a turning point for the life span of many traditional games. The response will be that which many men and women from European society want to give : should we should we not bring into the 21st century the social and cultural heritage of several centuries represented in traditional games? The same question of the **right to be different** is posed by so-called minority languages and cultures.

One thing is certain. The regrouping of traditional games into regional, national and even international federations will be a very powerful and effective way of making them officially understood and recognised. The creation of the FILC in 1985, the reform of the old FALSAB in 1994, now became confederation for all traditional sports and games committees, the creation of the Flemish Federation of Traditional Games and the Italian confederation are excellent examples to follow.

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THE SURVIVAL AND REVIVAL OF TRADITIONAL SPORTS AND GAMES IN CORNWALL

Roger HOLMES, Journalist, Cornwall

Unlike most aspects of Cornish life, and with the important exception of wrestling and, to a lesser extent, hurling, very little has been written on our traditional sports and games. This is not just an example of the common place being taken for granted and overlooked; the omission has more solid roots than simple neglect, roots that tell us much about the social climate within which, over the past century and a half, this aspect of our life has had to struggle to survive.

It was not always so; for centuries to be a good wrestler was something to be proud of, and gentlemen took part in hurling matches.

The rise of deep mining in the 18th century, with its associated heavy industries, wrought rapid and dramatic social upheavals as old villages developed into towns and new, often ill-disciplined, settlements arose on remote moorlands away from the calming influence of the established communities. The work was desperately hard and dangerous with the risk of accident and disease. In many mining fields death from old age was a rare luxury as entire lifetimes were compressed into little more than 30 years. In others, the privilege of a longer span was too often tempered by crippled limbs or damaged lungs. However, it also carried the chance of great and sudden wealth and, in any event it was work, skilled work, of which the miners were extremely proud and for which they were widely respected. And tin working in Cornwall already had a history of a millennium and a half.

The brutalising effect of the life attracted the efforts of social reformers who discouraged what they saw as violent sports and, for example, bull-baiting was quickly ended although, unfortunately, they were not as successful regarding the companion « sports » of dog, badger and cock fighting, which continue even today in a few shady corners, out of sight of the law. Unfortunately, the reformers also turned their attention to more legitimate activities such as wrestling.

Sports and games, in general, were rather looked down upon as idle frivolities, distracting people away from Cod and Chapel. Something of this attitude continued into the present century, affecting the priorities of the folklorists. This, I think, helps to explain why some of the games dropped out of common use, though sometimes surviving longer as children's games, and why the subject has been too little esteemed to merit serious study.

However, the story is not entirely negative, as we shall now see.

The oldest game of which we have tangible evidence is *Nine Men' Morris*, a board for which, scratched on a piece of slate, was found at Tintagel and dates from the 10th century. However, two activities still played today may well be far older; indeed, their origins are lost in the mists of prehistory. They are hurling and wrestling.

Hurling today is restricted largely to the parish of St Columb, a chiefly agricultural parish near the middle of the country, although a debased form is played, by children, at St Ives, a fishing port and tourist resort in the far west. However, until quite recently it was also played at St Agnes, a former mining parish on the north coast, and used to be much more widespread than now. It is particularly associated with Lent and Shrove Tuesday and may, as with similar games played all over Europe (cf. La Soule in Brittany) have its origins in a pagan spring festival. Richard Carew, in his *Survey of Cornwall*, printed in 1602, describes two forms of the game. Hurling to Country is undoubtedly the older form and is the version played today. Two teams form up and dispute possession of the ball, which is usually made of silver-covered apple wood and is about 10 cm in diameter. The teams are not necessarily equal in number, nor do they wear any distinctive markings; membership of one or the other is known to the other players by familiarity. Each team has its own goal, which may be many kilometres apart. In St Columb, the Townsmen play the Countrymen of the parish, and an intimate knowledge of the local topography is combined with skill and cunning to win the day. A return match is played a few days later and that is it for the year. The ball is thrown up in the town centre and is vigorously contested; the shops all board up their windows for the day!

The second version mentioned by Carew is clearly a sophisticated development of this and is no longer played; indeed, unlike the foregoing, it seems to be completely overlooked in the literature, so it is difficult to know when it ceased to be played.

In hurling to goal the two teams are much smaller and must be equal in number (though the actual number may vary from game to game according to how many are available.) The field of play is also much smaller though, again, variable according to circumstances. The ball may only be passed from one to another in the same side by being thrown backwards, but each player marks his opposite number in the other team and tries to gain possession. If this is not done cleanly and a struggle ensues then the matter is resolved by a wrestling match, after which play resumes. According to Carew, it was played more by gentlemen (often after weddings) than by « ordinary » folk (unlike the other version) which may explain how it fell out of favour as the gentry changed their manners during the industrialisation of our country. The author introduced the game to a junior school some years ago and the pupils enjoyed it, but it was rather looked down on as a

poor version of Rugby, and it was not continued. This comparison with Rugby is interesting. The rule that the ball may only be passed backwards is an obvious similarity; the wrestling to decide disputed possession could be seen as a prototype scrum and, indeed, the whole game can be seen as a precursor of Rugby which may, indeed, be considered nowadays as our national sport.

Wrestling may well be as ancient as hurling and the Cornish men's love of the sport and their prowess at it were proverbial for many centuries. It is a stand-up style, with no ground play. The wrestlers wear a special jacket on which the holds must be made, and the object is throw your opponent so that both shoulders and a hip or both hips and a shoulder touch the ground at the same time. To achieve this, a variety of trips, heaves and throws are employed, good play being ensured by three « sticklers », so called because they used to carry sticks with which to point and signal, who are usually former wrestlers, themselves. The sport has known very variable fortunes. For centuries up to the second half of the 18th century good wrestlers were widely respected. The social crisis of that overtook us at that time caused the social reformers to include it amongst the activities to be discouraged. It was now considered a game « unfit for Christian men to engage in! » However, it survived and throughout the 19th century maintained a large band of practitioners and followers until the decline in mining from the 1870s onwards. Cornish miners now helped to open up most of the World's major mining fields (it used to be said that anywhere in the world where there was a hole, there would be Cornish men at the bottom, digging away with pick and shovel.) They did not lose their love of wrestling, however, and tournaments soon became a feature of life in the gold fields of California, Australia and the Transvaal, and the copper mines of Montana and Norway.

The game was not forgotten at home and early in the new century many local committees were formed or reformed to promote it. In 1923 many of these were federated to the new Cornish wrestling Association which tackled the task of modernising the sport to make it appeal more to modern players and audiences. Timed rounds and scoring with points awarded for style were attempts to speed up matches that could sometimes last for hours, but this displeased some of the older wrestlers and they left to found a rival body. However, soon after World War Two the two sides came together again.

Cornish Wrestling has undoubtedly suffered from competition with better promoted professional games and with judo, with its international glamour. It is seriously short of money, and the organisation was for a long time rather cliquey. Nevertheless, with more active promotion it could easily regain much of its former popularity. The interest is there with the people, but they need to be wooed.

Two more old games should like to mention briefly now are familiar to Bretons and, perhaps, to many people everywhere. In Brittany you call one Quilles, we call it Keels or Kayles, the same name. It is a form of nine pins, in which nine pegs are set up to be knocked down by bowling balls at them. It is still played in a few

places, and could form a basis for town twinning activities. The pins are usually made of wood, but in some places in the past they were of tightly bound straw. The game could be played on compacted ground or on specially-laid boards.

The second we call Coits or Quoits, the spelling seems variable. The basic game is to throw a horse-shoe at a vertical stick, though I believe there are several variations according to circumstances.

Wrestling was and still is equally popular in the agricultural as well as the mining, quarrying and fishing regions. All these also have, or had, their own special competitions to enhance and demonstrate their work related skills. In the days before mechanical rock drills miners used to compete at rock-boring competitions by hand, single-handed or two-handed according to the custom of the area. These ceased a century ago as the industry modernised. Farmers, on the other hand, despite modernisation, still compete in the old skills - horse ploughing, for example - as well as in the newer ones. The older ones are more fun, perhaps, through being more personal; personal skill is more important than mechanical brute force. The completion of the through railway line in the mid 19th century led to the opening up of vast new markets for the fishing industry, especially for such perishable species as mackerel. The fleet grew in numbers, but the boats also grew in size and speed. Sailing to the fishing grounds and, particularly, getting back to market became a much more competitive affair, leading to unofficial races between skippers. The big mackerel boats were very fast, and skippers often employed sophisticated means, such as shifting ballast, to gain a greater advantage over a rival. The fishermen trained in this manner became much sought after as crews for the big racing yachts of the period. It came to an end with the large scale installation of motors in the early years of this century. There have been races for powered craft since at least 1912, but they are not as serious as before.

There has recently been formed a Cornish Lugger Association to encourage the restoration of the surprisingly large number of these old boats that remain in existence, but it is expensive work. It is interesting that the moving spirit behind this movement is, himself, a working fisherman. The only true survivors of the old style regattas are for the Truro River oyster dredgers. The fleet, a mixture of purpose-built boats and converted pilchard luggers, comprises the last survivors of traditional working sail in northern Europe. The boats are from circa 7-10 metres in length and are worked with one or two man crews. Some of them are very old, 50-100 years or more, but are kept thoroughly up to date, with the best modern sails and running gear. They are working craft, not museum pieces. Most modern craft have glass-fibre hulls moulded off one of the more successful wooden craft.

Some years ago, a Falmouth Working Boat Association was formed to regulate the racing, especially in regard to boats no longer working full time. This is an issue today as the oyster beds have been struck by *Bonhamia*, an affliction which

doesn't hurt humans but renders the oysters unsaleable. There is no doubt that the racing is holding the fleet together for when the fishery resumes as presumably it will sometime. Racing has become more formal than it used to be; some of the crews wear uniforms as on the smarter yachts, and at the end of every race the crews cheer each other as they pass.

In the old days every port had its pilot gigs; long, lean, light craft propelled by six oars (since a late 18th century Act designed to ensure that the smugglers couldn't out-row the government boats!) These boats were also used for rescue and salvage work and other duties. With the end of the days of commercial sail between the World Wars, the gigs were laid up in sheds or abandoned on quay sides. Just after the war, an enthusiast decided that something should be done to save the last ones. An Association was formed to restore and race them and this has been so successful that new ones are now being built despite their great cost and the long waiting list from the few experts with the specialised skill to build them. The racing is very keen and is also a popular spectator sport for the visitors. Some foreign crews are showing interest as well.

Less expansive, and less prestigious but still popular are the randans, small, light weight derivatives of the river salmon-fishing and watermen's boats. The three-person crews row four oars per boat (one, two and one). It is worth noting that women compete very enthusiastically in both types of boat.

The foregoing is a brief survey of the adult traditional games and sports of Cornwall. It is not fully comprehensive but gives some idea of the variety. Of course, a wide range of modern, international sports and games are played, but *I believe that, with publicity and other encouragement, several traditional activities could be restored to popular status, and that this would be worth doing.*

SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Frisian (North Holand) sporting games : a dynamic approach

Klaas JANSMA, Journalist, Fryslan (Holand)

Introduction

Chauvinistic feelings of many Frisians were shocked on that winter day in 1954 : their provincial champions and favourites Geert Dijkstra and Egbert van der Ploeg lost dramatically in a speed skating-competition with Gerard Maarse (Holland) and Arne Johansen (Norway). It was not really a competition of skaters but, in fact, a match between the traditional Frisian wood-iron skates and the modern leather-steel "shoebased" constructions. The Frisians gained only once in a competition of eight 160 meter for men; 140 meters for female skaters races, and their skates had proved to be inferior in speed skating.

Twenty years later the editors of the *Encyclopedie van het hedendaagse Friesland* concluded, that in the sixties the Frisian short track skating sport suffered of loss of interest. Nowadays, short-track skating events are organised incidentally and without much success. A rich tradition is fading away. Frisians are still very enthusiastic skaters and supporters. But they have chosen for the international, Olympic and world champion games, instead of supporting and enjoying the local activities of their own people.

In the same period, the summer-tradition of *skûtsjesilen*, also a typical Frisian game, enjoyed a surprising revival and evolved to a popular "chain" of happenings for hundreds of participants and many thousands of spectators. In 1954 only five or six skippers participated in what seemed to be the last *skûtsjeraces*. In 1989 there existed two bodies in charge of the game: the old *misje Skûtsjesilen* with fourteen ships and about three hundred participants including the organisers, and the younger lepen *Fryske Kampioenskippen Skûtsjesilen* with about 35 ships (about six hundred participants). How come ?

SPORTIFICATION TILL DEATH

Speed skating was an element of the rich ice-games-tradition of Frisia. This country with its many lakes, canals and "summerpollers" (water-covered between October and April) changed totally when in severe winters the isolated villages

could be reached or left by skaters. The natural action-radius of man, normally very restricted in wintertime, was multiplied. Skating then was the fastest way of moving far from home; skates were called " the iron wings ". Of course the best skaters tried to prove their quality. Sometimes and incidentally inn-keepers organised tournaments. In 1840 a new phenomenon announced itself when in Dokkum a group of community-leaders founded an ice-club, to organise ice-games, especially speed skating on the Frisian short track distance of 160 meters (175 yards).

This example was followed by many towns and villages. They did not only founded ice-clubs to organise games on more or less fixed locations (marked parts of canals or lakes), but bought and exploited newly constructed " ice-pools ". These had many advantages in comparison with the natural rinks, being safer, ice covered earlier and not damaged by ships. Within less than half a century the total number of ice-clubs with their own ice pools raised to about 150.

It was in a time of dramatic social and societal changes in which the new era of skating-sport had begun. Peasant society changed very fast by free trade and welfare, especially by the selling of Frisian agricultural products all over Europe. Infrastructure was strongly approved: new roads, new canals, new railways. Semi feudalism was suddenly broken down by the new constitution of Thorbecke (1848-50). In fact, the period of dynamic change in economy and infrastructure lasted from 1850-1877. Socio-political and religious contention shocked and divided small Frisian communities between 1850 and 1913.

Many new societal and cultural phenomena appeared in this second half of the nineteenth century. A number of religious and political institutions were established. The new appearance of the old skating-sport became very popular and other old ice-games extinct at the same time. The ice-clubs created in their tournaments a division between participants and spectators, who were supporters when their own favourites were in action. But new regional heroes were born, taking the places of the locals. To attract them to small villages, the clubs raised their prices and premiums to a, for those times, absurd level of sometimes more than four month incomes for the winner and quiet a reward for the second best.

Nevertheless, local speed skating happenings for the members of the ice-clubs (almost all valid inhabitants) with some curious variations like couple skating, veteran or school skating, were organised each winter in every ice pool possessing community. Of course abuses troubled the rather new professional-sportive tradition. Favourites for example made agreements; suspicion of corruption was fed by strange outcomes. The best skaters divided the most attractive tournaments. That led to the founding of an association of ice-clubs in 1919. In co-operation they could shut out notorious sinners, and they did sometimes, preventing too striking examples from " selling the victory and dividing the money ".

In-between a re-introduced " playful element " had fed a curious discussion. Local benefactors sometimes gave bacon and beans to all the participants. So it might happen that in long severe winters changeless non-skaters participated in " spekrijden " (bacon-skating), in order to earn some food for wife and children. Even in the early fifties of the twentieth century this kind of " social food-supply " was still mentioned as an example of social abuse, being contrary to human dignity and sportive ethos, as commentators stated.

In these years, after world war II, the unique position of Frisian ice-skating as spectator-happening and chance for sportive glory was undermined by the rise of the international skating-sport supported by modern media, like radio and, a bit later, television. The ice-clubs didn't counteract; in fact they adapted their kind of speed skating to international standards. "Objectivation" of measuring achievements was introduced by using chronometers, partly substituting the pure man-to-man contest. The disappearance of the Frisian sport skates has been mentioned above. An era ended when an artificial ice-rink was constructed at Heerenveen, in 1967. It was a round 400 meters rink, according to international regulations, and not a traditional straight Frisian short track in the centre of a " tour-rink " for the pure recreationally skating spectators.

Accidentally, this heavy strike to tradition and game came in a rather long period of totally or almost "iceless" winters. About 1970, many ice-clubs organised more and more variations of international long track. The Frisian short track had been devaluated to a second rate kind of speed skating, fit for children and, still, anonymous members of ice-clubs.

But by the sharp division between " real, status full, international sport " and " just a game for some of ourselves " the inspiring happenings of former times didn't come back. By sportification this speed skating had lost its uniqueness. Traditional regional elements had all been subdued by international influences.

Yet the joy of skating survived. It found at the beginning of " the post-modern era " new manifestations in less local and more regional events like skating long tours, in 1985 and 1986 celebrated in euphoric joy of tens of thousands inhabitants and guests from abroad. A new definition of one-day communities could, then, be formulated: more than 15.000 people tied together by skating 200 kilometres in ten, twelve hours or more and their numerous helpers and supporters - cheering, watching and enjoying all day long.

SAFED BY TRADITIONALISM

In 1954 *skûtsjesilen* was nothing more but, in sociological terms, a survival. It hardly had any function for other people than the four or five last Mohicans. They sailed their races with old iron tjalks (60 feet long, 35 till 52 tons) like their ancestors did in forgotten times. Lodewijk Meeter, Klaas van der Meulen, Ulbe

Zwaga, Jan van Akker -their colleagues- had bought 4 motor- ships and sold their old vessels.

Skippers of the Frisian lakes and canals have never been rich; they just didn't starve in severe winters and had hard times in busy summers, transporting peat, dung, sand and mud.

Sailing faster than others however meant being well to do and getting the opportunity to buy a ship, constructed by famous shipbuilders. A few times a year the best sailing skippers met each other in races, e.g., at Grou.

During the last war these ships once again could be used for their original function; after 1948 sailing time was over. The races in ancient times weren't merely fights between skippers families; at least as important the performances of the ships were. One didn't win by some tricky manoeuvre; unwritten rules prevented those honourees victories or led, if the situation was not clear enough, to discussions and sometimes even physical fights between friends.

Then, about 1955, a few lovers of the Frisian *skûtsjes* tried to resettle a tradition in a new form. One of them brought some organisers together in a new organisational structure, some others formed committees to buy a *skûtsje*. So Earnewâld, Sneek, Grou and Heerenveen got their local ships, defending the honour of their town or village. Main objective in those days was not the championship -which was important for the local contributors, of course-, but saving a tradition. That's one reason why the " founding fathers " of the *Sintrale Kommisje Skûtsjesilen* didn't choose for sport skippers but, instead, asked skippers of profession to steer the ship. (Another reason was the difficulty of handling the large and heavy ships). Some years afterwards the *skûtsje* competition was a well organised chain of traditional sailing happenings with eleven, twelve and at last fourteen ships. That was the maximum, according to a decision of the members of SKS: existing of local organising committees, owners of ships and skippers.

This was not the only new rule in the revitalised tradition. In fact the unwritten rules of ancient *skûtsjesilen* were replaced by formal regulations. But some factors were not to be regulated. For instance the influence of one old champion, helping in rigging the ships of his three sons, all being favourites from that moment on.

Another strange factor was the influence of personal rivalry between some competitors. For many of the skippers and crews not the absolute classification was the most important outcome, but their relative achievement in comparison to their rivals, ships with, as it seemed, the same basic characteristics. So Albert van Akker, the skipper of Leeuwarden, could enjoy his sixth place more than Tjitte Brouwer, the champion of Heerenveen, did his second or third classification.

In line with that traditional relativity of absolute results, the difference in prices and premiums became smaller. Any ship gets the same " start-premium ", and number 12 gets almost the same beautiful souvenirs (just imagine participating fifteen years and living in a small house) and useful articles as number 2. (After the season, the prices of one ship are divided by the 14 members of the crew).

In the seventies the SKS tried to find a solution for a classical sportification problem: owners invested more and more in larger sails. That sapped the competition and made it dangerous: the smaller ships became inferior to the larger ones. All the ships with larger sails became more dangerous for their 14 persons' crews. The SKS hired a shipbuilding professor to find a solution in some kind of normalisation. He, however, couldn't explain his complicated formula to the skippers. Mutiny threatened the sacrificed but never realised unity within the organisation. Fortunately, the more practical and less learned shipbuilder, Amels, found a new understandable way of normalisation by using traditional elements like measure, stability and weight.

A new problem arose when the old skippers grew older and older, and some of them even died. Who should be the successors? One village had tried to get sport sailors accepted by the SKS assembly; in vain - a member of an old skippers' family should steer a *skûtsje*. That unwritten rule never became a formal article in SKS regulations, but the assembly was convinced of its value - strengthening the element of tradition.

Another threat for tradition had to be fought against : the introduction of new materials. Again SKS made the very important choice for tradition and against modern and standardised sport: no dacron; old cotton sails should be used. With help of the Dutch Ministry of Culture there came an award for the best to originality renovated ship of the fleet.

By limiting the number of participating ships, SKS created a problem when in the late seventies *skûtsjesilen* became very popular. Rich lovers of aquatic sports bought old vessels and renovated them; of course they wanted to sail races. They could, in fact, once or twice a year in new traditional happenings like the Harlingen-Terschelling race or the " Dung-race " from Workum in Friesland to the Holland garden area. But they wanted more. Not getting access to the official *skûtsje* association, they founded their own in 1981.

That time, a kind of *skûtsje*-culture had developed. The media discovered the unequalled verbal talents of some of the skippers and the unbelievable silence of others. Especially the regional Radio Fryslan used and explored this rich gold mine to make quiet popular programs; twenty two days in succession, all over one holiday's month. The popular skippers were honoured with literature and songs, and in the *skûtsje* places flourished clubs, organising popular feasts. All these

elements were supported by a generous sponsor, raising funds too for up keeping the expensive ships.

At first the *Iepen Fryske Kampioenskippen Skûtsjesilen* tried to legitimate its existence by accusing the SKS of elitism and exclusiveness. But after some disastrous seasons with chaotic sail events, much damage and ridiculous quarrel, the alternative *skûtsje* organisation was growing very fast. The first competitions really were laughter and cry-happenings. Sometimes the organisers didn't even know the exact outcomes and discussed them with journalists. Becoming more serious, this club of skûtsje maniacs chose after some years for pure tradition in rigging the ships, being more catholic than the pope and an example for the SKS. Though, there remained one principal difference: the SKS accepts only Frisian ships and skippers, the IFKS is an organisation of skûtsje owners from all regions. (Of course the skûtsjes have to be built in Friesland or the Frisian hemisphere in the neighbouring province of Groningen).

While the number of participating ships rose above the 35, most of them being sailed by a new generation of charter skippers or fanatics imitating the ancient skippers' behaviour, the IFKS narrowly escaped of financial and organisational crisis in 1989. Then, the SKS assembly generously offered to help her sister organisation.

Sportification in *skûtsjesilen* is still going on. Special training has been introduced by the SKS champions of the eighties. The skûtsje supporting villages want glory, no defeat. Losing skippers are dismissed, the winners are popular and, by the interest of regional and even national Dutch media, well-known. Yet tradition lives. For thousands of people, be it perhaps not for the most favourite skippers, *skûtsjesilen* is just fun.

Skûtsjesilen never became mere folklore - at first by the well-bred personalities-, later on by the sportive intentions of its participants. It didn't devaluate to the status of mere sport by the conservation and cultivation of traditions. It survived by activities of real skippers, supported by elites of organisers. And it got new functions: manifestation of rivalry between regional communities, opportunity for having fun. That all was embedded in a rich and fruitful field of cultural and social activities.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

Several Frisian games have been institutionalised in a "modern", sportive way. Fierljeppen, pole leaping, and Keatsen, playing five's too, have got their sportive organisations. Some of the games which hadn't, have disappeared. Others were rather strictly tied to other modern external institutions, like celebrating the village feast at queen's birthday or at market day.

Sportification seems to be an autonomous process, strengthening itself once started. It creates a value orientation, in which it is mentioned as the only vital alternative for folklore. Game seems to be something for children, in this way of valuing. It is, or was recently at least, literally not to be taken serious. And the worth full things in life should be taken serious, shouldn't they.

Sportification is fatal to a small regional sport with resemblance to world sports. The status and power of modern media can't never be neglected. The more the traditional game develops in the direction of international sport, the more it loses its unique selling position. It becomes rather one dimensional by losing ties to vital elements of community life, weakening by that process community life itself and so turning around to the end of existence.

This process can be restricted or perhaps even be stopped and turned to a new perspective by feeding the poorer, efficiently organised and well instituted sportive game with traditional socio-cultural elements having an attractive package function. Details can be important by their symbolic functions, pointing to uniqueness and exclusiveness. They fertilise in themselves community life, creating a fruitful kind of soil for cultural manifestations.

Games can't be saved by only condemning sportivity, standardisation, internationalisation or modern institutionalisation. A more subtle and multidimensional approach is necessary. In fact, consciously stimulating the process of revitalising or preserving traditional games can't be the main objective of critical and scientific analysis. It is a question of marketing, asking for elaborated marketing concepts. So when anthropologists feel some commitment to this subject, they should turn to marketing theory in order to create better perspectives for traditional, regional games. Aspects like optimal price level, point of sale, promotional aspects and the attractiveness of the game product itself are relevant. In my view they are decisive when it comes to a "to be or not to be".

WRESTLING, the Ancient Modern Sport

William BAXTER

President of the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling

*"Now clear the ring, for hand to hand
The manly wrestlers take their stand."*

The Lady of the Lake
Canto 1V "The Combat"
by Sir Walter Scott.

The meaning of the word "Wrestling" in English is quite precise, it is, "Combat between two people who try to overpower one another by strength or by techniques using the hips, legs or arms but without blows". In some varieties such as Pancration where punching and kicking were permitted that part of the contest was fighting, but, the major part of the bout took place when the combatants wrestled for control or submission on the ground. Many sports historians consider wrestling to be the oldest of all organised sports and throughout ancient history there are many references to it, the Summerians had a myth about Gilgamesh which was written down in Cuneiform and a bronze statuette of two wrestlers was found in 1938 in Summerian ruins at Kyafaje near Baghdad, which is thought to have been created about 2,800 B.C. In Egypt six paintings on a tomb wall dated 2470 B.C. show six children wrestling, most famous of all are the four hundred wall paintings in a tomb at Ben-y-Hassan which were painted around 2,000 B.C., there are two other tombs, one with two hundred nineteen and the other with one hundred twenty two drawings of wrestling.

When Odysseus wrestled at the funeral games before Troy circa 1193 BC the wrestling described was primitive and scientific wrestling was likely to have been introduced into Greece from Egypt during the Minoan period in which the hero Theseus became revered as the first scientific wrestler. The sport was probably introduced into the 18th Olympic Games held in 704 B.C. and the style competed was Orthopali, a 'Loosehold' style in which victory was gained when any part of an opponent's body touched the ground, the martial emphasis of the Olympic Games meant that a victor was held in greater esteem if he could cleanly throw his opponent without himself touching the ground, he received the title, *"He who is not covered in dust"*. Milo of Croton was the most famous wrestler in this style and won six Olympic Games but he refused to compete in the other styles because they had groundwork, his fame was aided by the fact that Plato and Pythagoras were wrestlers and Milo allowed his house to be a haven for Pythagoreans The three other styles practised in Greece at that time were;

1. Alindisis which was similar to modern Free Style with submission holds.

2. Acrochirsmos in which opponents apparently seized each other's hands and fingers.

3. Pankration, in this style kicking, punching and submission holds were permitted. Greece has also retained from time immemorial a traditional style of wrestling called Palaima which is practised only among the farmers and peasants in the country districts.

Sporting festivals were held by many other ancient peoples, an example is the Tailtinn Festival in Ireland founded by Lugh the Sun-god in honour of his foster mother Tailtu, it was a harvest festival held annually from 632 BC until August 1st 1169 AD. It is interesting to note that Ireland a northern country held an annual sporting competition which lasted for a longer period than the original Olympic Games, a fact which is ignored by most sports historians.

Asia has many ancient nations and peoples who have retained their traditional wrestling styles and in most of these countries wrestling is the most popular and prestigious participant and spectator sport. China still has a Loose Hold style called Kiohmli and in 700 BC the jacket style called Shuai Chiao was considered as a military skill on a par with archery and chariot racing. Japan whose feudal aristocracy developed many systems of unarmed combat has retained its traditional wrestling style of Sumo which may be unique amongst styles of wrestling in that in historical times it is the only recorded style of wrestling which was used to settle the destiny of a throne. The book "Nihonshoki" written in 720 A.D. describes how a king could not decide which of his two sons was to become his heir so he commanded that they wrestle to decide the matter. Mongolia has its traditional Berilda or "Eagle Wrestling", the wrestlers wear special waistcoats, brief shorts and boots and when victory has been won dance to simulate the wheeling of an eagle over the steppes. These ardent horsemen have another style called Bokh which is competed on horseback.

Our ancestors used the imagery of wrestling to illustrate their most profound religious myths and when one searches through manuscripts, paintings, relief, statues and statuettes evidence of wrestling's esteem is easily found. On the Indian subcontinent the Lord Krishna who lived circa 3,100 BC was described in the 6th century BC as a wrestler, the Gurkha prince later called Buddha is also claimed to have been a formidable wrestler and Hanuman the Hindu god and patron of Indian wrestlers became a popular deity about 800 BC. In Anatolia and throughout the Ottoman Empire there existed schools or Tekes which during the 14th and 15th centuries taught the traditional Pehlivanlar Gures, some of these schools had as many as three hundred pupils who were trained every morning by renowned masters and the scientific techniques developed there played a key role in establishing the supremacy which the Turks enjoyed in the Olympic styles for many years. Further east in Georgia and Armenia, Tchidaoba and Kokh are still practised to the accompaniment of traditional music, throughout the former Soviet Union there are about thirty traditional styles of wrestling still in existence and they

are particularly important to the culture of the Turkic peoples. Our Asian journey ends in the Korean Peninsula where the Koreans use in their traditional Tsirrum a long scarf which is wrapped around the right thigh and the waist to permit holds to be taken, contests in South Korea are televised and have a massive following.

Oceania and its scattered islands in the Pacific all have their traditional wrestling styles as have the Aborigines of Australia and the Maoris of New Zealand. These styles are very different, some have hand holds, others grip the hair, take hold around the waist or on a cloth wrapped around the hips or Loose Hold as in Sumo in which any part of the body can be attacked. In one island group one or two women compete against a man and in New Zealand competitions are often started by a bout between women.

The ancient sport illustrated so graphically by the Egyptians has many other examples throughout the continent of Africa, in Ethiopia the ancient Backhold style of Tiggil is now being revived and promoted officially by the government. From the Libyan desert to West and South Africa cave paintings have been found which depict wrestling. These ancient styles are still practised and it is interesting to see films from Zaire, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal or the Sudan which show vigorously contested bouts and large appreciative audiences. Now the sport has gained a new dynamic with the establishment of a Pan African Championship, a Loose Hold style has been agreed which retains the characteristics of the most common indigenous styles of the continent.

When the Spaniards first arrived in The Canary Islands the archipelago was inhabited by a strange race of tall white people, the Guanches. Their style of wrestling witnessed by these early visitors is widely practised to this day and in fact is the national sport, the wrestling is a Loosehold style and once the contest has started the wrestler may attack any part of the opponent's body, victory is gained when any part of an opponent's body touches the ground.

Alaska and its Arctic wastes to Tierra Del Fuego and Cape Horn is a vast land mass which encompasses many climatic zones. In response to their environment the indigenous peoples of the Americas have evolved many different life styles, temperature and environment, naked or clothed dictated the type or style of wrestling which developed in each area. Competitors take hold of the hair, every part of the body or the clothes, on sleeves, collar or trousers. Sometimes "loose holds" are adopted whereas other areas have "closed holds". Sometimes tripping is permitted while in others areas wrestling science has not developed and the contest is a primitive one of heaving, jerking, pulling and pushing.

Television and the cinema have taught those who cannot travel a great deal about the world and its peoples, television's insatiable appetite for material brings into our homes the life and culture of tribes from the most remote places on Earth. To the student of wrestling these technological innovations bring many advantages, in the

comfort of our living rooms we are able to study, for example, the wrestling styles of the inhabitants of the Amazonian Rain Forest. One excellent film showed the life of the Xavante Indians and it showed bouts in their traditional Backhold, typical throws were seen such as a Backheel and an Inside Hype so magnificently applied that any champion competing at Grasmere in England's Lake District would have been delighted to have been the wrestler who had executed it. Each of the many wrestling styles of the world has techniques which every one of us could claim for our own national style, but none is particular to any one style, each has its specialists but none is unique; as mankind has moved over the face of the earth he has brought wrestling his first organised physical activity with him and wrestling has been found in all of the five continents.

This is a very brief summary of an ancient heritage which belongs to mankind as a whole. Most of these ancient wrestling styles have been eclipsed by the popularity of the modern styles, Greco-Roman, Free Style, Judo, and Sambo. Only one is a traditional style the others are all constructed. The rules of modern Olympic Free Style have been developed in the 20th century and it now differs in some crucial details of the rules but not at all in its ethos from its progenitor the Catch-as-Catch-Can of North West England. Indeed there and in Scotland it is still called by its original name which has none of the histrionic connotations applied to "Le Catch" in much of Europe. The technical development and international progress of Catch-as-Catch-Can was greatly aided by its similarity to the traditional styles of the Indian subcontinent and the former Ottoman Empire where in both areas the sport had been patronised for centuries by the aristocracy which had encouraged the development of standards unknown in the west.

Greco-Roman wrestling has no relationship to the ancient wrestling styles of Greece or Rome. It was developed in the physical culture clubs of Lyons and Bordeaux in France, codified in 1848 and was for a long time known as "French Wrestling". In the rules adopted by the founders tripping was forbidden, they insisted wrongly that tripping was not permitted in the ancient Olympic Games. The revived Olympic Games first held in 1896 included Greco-Roman wrestling on the programme and a professional World and European Championship was held in 1898 in Vienna which was won by the Estonian George Hackenschmidt. (Catch-as-catch-can was included in the 1904 Games in St Louis, U.S.A. in response to pressure from the Americans.) A second professional Greco-Roman World Championship tournament was held in Paris in 1899 and in 1912 FILA. (The International Amateur Wrestling Association) was formed and when reorganised after the first World War it proved to be a turning point for both styles.

FILA has now changed its constitution to accord equal rights to Greco-Roman, Free Style, Sambo and traditional wrestling, which may help some threatened styles to survive. Sambo received this recognition due to pressure from the Soviet Union. When a style of wrestling was to be chosen for competition in the annual Spartakiad tournaments there was great controversy, advocates of every style

fought to have their own included, Sambo which had been codified as a sport in 1938 proved to be the ideal compromise, it's name comprises the first three letters of the word "samozash-chita (self defence) and the initial letters of the words "bez orizhiya" (without weapons). Techniques from all the traditional styles are easily applied so those wrestlers were able to adapt quickly to the new style.

Judo was devised by Professor Jigaro Kano and in 1882 he founded the Kodokan to teach it, at first he had just six wrestlers in his school, to popularise his new style he claimed a mythical historical link with Jujitsu. His new wrestling style had little or no connection with Jujitsu, he called it "Judo", Ju gave a nostalgic link with the past, it meant "flexibility" or "exploitation" and "do" gave a link to the future, his purpose which was for a new methodology and an even newer morality was tied tightly to English utilitarianism. Jigaro Kano had been sent on a "grand tour" of Europe in 1889 just at the time when wrestling was at the peak of its popularity. The object of his tour was to study, in particular the physical education systems of the West. During his trip he concluded mistakenly that Catch-as-catch-can or Free style was too robust a style of wrestling for the Japanese physique; furthermore the inspiration for the judo jacket or judogi may owe as much to the jacket worn by the wrestlers of Cornwall and Devon in England as to any native costume of the Japanese. In 1886 when the Tokio Municipal Police Board had organised a team competition between the Kodokan and the Totsuka ju-jitsu school to decide an official system to be taught to the police, the Kodokan won 13 of the 15 bouts. Contemporary photographs and illustrations show that the competing wrestlers of both teams wore only loin cloths and the reports state that most of the combat took place in ground work.

Ancient wrestling styles are still practised by many European nations, and the authors have researched 53 such styles, sometimes the difference between them is more cultural than technical, some are vigorous and popular but others are on the edge of extinction and we have also noted 43 now lost. Each of these sports is a vital part of our common cultural heritage often handed down and treasured from the remote past, certainly some of the sport's customs give evidence of this, though, in western industrialised countries the ancient customs have been weakened or broken, but not so in the peasant societies of eastern Europe or Asia. At international wrestling tournaments it is common to see wrestlers when leaving their corner at the start of a bout, kiss their hand then touch the mat to transfer the kiss. The origin of this gesture goes back to the stone age. They are asking a blessing from the earth mother. This custom was seen in its most dramatic form at the finals of the 1972 Olympic Games when Alexander Medved of the Soviet Union won his third consecutive gold medal for Free Style wrestling at Munchen. Immediately the final bell rang, Medved, still on top of his defeated opponent threw his hands in the air, stood up and walked to the centre of the mat. The referee came over and formally raised Medved's hand to signify victory. To the thunderous applause of the spectators the giant Russian walked round the mat with his hands in the air then knelt and kissed the centre of the mat. He repeated this gesture in

the red and blue corners then leapt off the podium into the arms of his ecstatic comrades. After the presentation ceremony was finished the silver medalist Osman Duraliev of Bulgaria, tears streaming down his cheeks slowly walked from the winners rostrum to the mat, stopped for a minute then knelt and kissed the centre and the same dramatic gesture occurred twice during the Greco-Roman finals. To the casual observer it could appear as typically extrovert behaviour differing only in detail from the victors in other sports. Nothing could be further from the truth.

When the peasants of Turkey meet at their traditional wrestling festivals, the wrestling is preceded by a ritual dance and a prayer is chanted by all the Pehlivan (heroes or wrestlers), then the wrestlers kneel kiss their hand then touch the ground with it. The same ritual with local variations is carried out among Turkic peoples from the Balkans to Mongolia, other rituals survive from ancient times. During the 1972 Olympic Greco-Roman 57kg final the crowd disputed that Weil of West Germany had been pinned by the Soviet wrestler, due to the disturbance the other finals could not proceed, Weil eventually returned to the mat where he raised the victor's hand to show his acceptance of the referee's decision. His opponent, obviously from one of the Asiatic States then put his arms around the German's waist lifted him off the ground, held him for a few seconds then put him down and raised his own arms to be lifted in turn. The significance of this typically oriental gesture is obvious, if any ill will lingers either man is completely vulnerable to the other's malice.

The object of wrestling whether it is a "Fall" or any other non injurious method of gaining victory is symbolic defeat, a study should be made of the methods of deciding victory of all the styles, then the results could be compared with other types of ritualised fighting to see if new insights into the development of combat sports were possible.

EUROPEAN WRESTLING

A SURVEY

This survey of European wrestling comprises of two groups, Group A includes the forms still practised, Group B comprises those forms extinct or about which little is known to the author. Included are some styles from nations contiguous to Europe as these are either related to styles practised in Europe or are indeed the same sport with minor indigenous variations of the rules. This is particularly noticeable in the wrestling styles of the Turkic peoples on the southern rim of the former Soviet Union and in the former Ottoman Empire.

Group A

ALBANIA

Mundje Vendce

Identical to the Pehlivanlar or "heroic" wrestling of Turkey and the other Balkan states. Includes ground wrestling (par terre). Victory is when the opponent's shoulders touch the ground. First codified in writing in 1947

Village Wrestling 2

A form of Backhold similar to that of Scotland and England with standing work only, victory when any part of the opponent's body touches the ground.

AUSTRIA

Rangeln

Special shorts are worn and techniques are as in free style. Holds can be taken anywhere on the opponent's body or costume and it includes ground work, victory is won when the opponent's shoulders touch the ground.

Juppenringen, Hosenlumpf, Karntenringen

(different names according to district)

Standing work only and a fixed hold. Victory is won when any part of the opponent's body touches the ground. Limited rounds and area.

BOSNIA

Identical to the Pehlivanlar (heroic) wrestling of the other Balkan States. Always accompanied by music. Rules were standardised about 1950

BRITTANY (FRANCE)

Gouren

Standing work only and arm holds are limited to the opponent's jacket. Victory is won when both the opponent's shoulders hit the ground at the same time. Gouren and a number of other traditional sports and games in Brittany were in danger of dying out after the 1st World War but in 1930 Dr Charles Cotonnec formed the F.A.L.S.A.B. and gave an impetus to the revival of traditional sports and especially Gouren, he codified it and gave it an organisational structure. Three years previously he had made contact with the Cornish Style wrestlers of South West England with a view to mutual assistance and together they had organised annual Inter Celtic wrestling championships. He and Tregonning Hooper secretary of the then Cornwall County Wrestling Association first sowed a seed in 1927 which in 1985 became The International Federation of Celtic Wrestling. (F.I.L.C.) The Cornish style and Gouren are virtually the same sport but Gouren has been more successful in adapting its rules to modern needs including an effective points system, time limits and sensible weight categories, it is currently in a phase of vigorous development and expansion. Despite its structural modernisation Gouren maintains all its old customs including the system of challenge matches in which the prize is a sheep and competitions which take place on sawdust. Gouren is the

only western style in which the wrestler's oath survives, prior to every contest the wrestlers repeat an oath swearing to respect the rules of fair play and the customs of the sport, in the mid-19th century, at a contest in Begard the oath was recorded and it affirmed that the wrestler was a Christian and had not used witchcraft to assist him. The wrestler's oath seems to have fallen into disuse in Cornwall in between 1870 and 1900. Wrestling was very prestigious in Brittany amongst the aristocracy in the Mediaeval period, a challenge match between the King of England's "Favourite", a champion Breton wrestler, and a Scottish nobleman took place during the court celebrations for the birth of Edward 1st in London in 1239AD.

BULGARIA

Pehlivanlar Gures

Identical to Turkish wrestling particularly among the Turkish minority, there were a number of local variations of the rules but these were standardised about 1950, the bouts are usually accompanied by music.

CORSICA (FRANCE)

E Vince (A Bracciuta)

This sport ceased to be practiced around about 1940 as the war had reduced the number of young people in the agricultural communities. Although the sport gradually ceased to be practised the older men had not forgotten its customs and techniques and it has now been revived. It is a type of primitive Loosehold wrestling with no ground work.

Junta (A Ghjustra)

Similar to Pancration this sport has also been recently revived but is not practised competitively and is used as a training for self defense. A number of esoteric features common to some Oriental styles but alien to normal European custom have been added.

ENGLAND

Lancashire style / Catch-as-Catch-Can

This style is the origin of modern Olympic Free Style and U.S. Intercollegiate style, modern Free Style has a sophisticated points system which is intended to give an objective decision rather than a judges opinion if no fall takes place. The name "Free Style" is a direct translation from the French "Lutte Libre" which is what the Lancashire dialect name means. The famous hold a Full Nelson was so named by the Lancashire wrestlers as a compliment to Admiral Lord Nelson and is supposed to resemble the tactics used by him in his victories over Napoleon's fleet at the battles of the Nile and Trafalger in 1805. Olympic Free Style developed from Catch-as-catch-can after 1921 when the "touch" fall was enforced by F.I.L.A. at French insistence, though Longhurst in 1917 stated that prior to the professional wrestling boom of the late 19th century the touch fall had been the Lancashire tradition. Amateur Free Style's technical development was rapid, ground work in particular which had already been modified by Turkish participation in the

professional sport was even more influenced under the new F.I.L.A. rules by these techniques from Turkish "Yagli Gures" or oil wrestling. The techniques which at first had the greatest impact had been developed in the 15th century wrestling schools of the Ottoman Empire to control an oiled opponent and are known in Turkish as "Sarma" or leg winding. Recent rule changes which have emphasised Greco-Roman techniques involving bridging to score points were first introduced into the 1908 Olympic Greco-Roman tournament by the Italian lightweight Enrico Porro with devastating effect and take the sport further technically from its British/American roots. The oldest known illustration of wrestling in Lancashire is a late 14th century carving on a Misericord in Halsall Church which shows two men dressed in shorts with a belt or sash around their waist, each man has a hold on the left thigh and the right hand side of the belt of his opponent.

Cumberland & Westmorland Style (Backhold)

This style takes place in all the Northern counties of England and the Border counties of Scotland and consists of standing work only with a fixed hold taken by placing the right hand under the opponent's left and joining the hands. Victory is gained if any part of an opponent's body touches the ground or if he breaks his hold, the area is unlimited when practiced outdoors. "Cumberland Style" is the oldest continually organised combat sport in England and records have been kept of competition winners since 1824, despite its popularity, researchers have so far not been able to find conclusive proof that the sport existed in its present form before the 18th century. The conservatism of its Governing Board has enabled the sport to resist sportification to a greater extent than most successful traditional styles. A society was first formed in London in the mid 18th century, perhaps as early as 1727, by inhabitants of the Northern Counties and was the earliest sports body in London, a competition was organised annually by it on Good Friday. Until about 1865 the old society was almost alone in London, but the newly founded amateur athletic clubs excluded wrestling from their programmes and gradually the increasing distinction between amateur and professional became a source of dissent within the society and it was wound up in 1895. The modern custom of giving championship belts to prizefighters originated in the North West of England where the custom was to give a belt to the winner of a wrestling contest which he would then wear to church on the following Sunday, one famous wrestler of the early 19th century William Richardson was nicknamed "Belted Wull" because he had won 240 belts in open competition. The first Championship Belt ever awarded in the U.S.A. was in Detroit in 1870 for the Championship of America in Collar and Elbow style and was won by Col J.H. McLaughlin when he regained the title he had lost September 1867. Amateur sports competitions in Australia originated in a series of competitions organised by migrant Scots in Melbourne in 1861 which included wrestling matches, "After the Cumberland and Westmorland fashion", from this small beginning has sprung the mighty Australian sports industry. When the professional wrestling boom began in the U.K. great publicity was given to two matches held in, The Agricultural Hall, Islington, London in January and February 1870, between, Jamieson and Wright of Cumberland and Le Boeuf and Dubois of France. The bouts took place in two styles, French and Cumberland and on each occasion there were 10,000 spectators.

Cornish Style

Standing work only and a special jacket is worn, arm holds are limited to the opponent's jacket. Victory is gained when an opponent's two shoulders and one hip or, two hips and one shoulder touch the ground. The men of Cornwall who fought with the English army at the battle of Agincourt in 1415 carried a flag showing two wrestlers in a hold which the Cornish wrestlers call a 'Hitch', their skills were recognised and praised by a number of English monarchs particularly Henry V 11th who took Cornish wrestlers with him when he went to meet the King of France in Calais in 1521 (The Field of the Cloth of Gold). There is a carving of wrestling in Exeter Cathedral dating from about 1375 which shows two wrestlers in jackets and with bare feet, however some 19th century writers have claimed that the jacket is a relic of the mediaeval belt wrestling and that Cornish and Devon wrestling is the true survivor of the old English Loosehold Style, Longhurst states that at first the wrestlers wrestled as in Loosehold, that the jacket was a later addition and that all holds were taken above the waist, but gives no authority for this. Carew writing in 1588 states, " This (wrestling) hath also his laws, of taking hold only above the girdle and wearing a girdle to take hold by". In the early 16th century there seems to have been two variations, the "Common game" in which the hold was taken on the collar and the waistband and the "Prize game" in which a wrestler stripped to the waist and put on a girdle or shawl over one shoulder and under the other for his opponent to take his hold on. Wrestling was the major sport in Cornwall and the rival English county of Devon but declined with the failure of the tin mining industry as the young men were forced to seek employment abroad. During the professional wrestling boom of the 19th century Cornish style matches took place all over the former British Empire and the U.S.A.; when the tin miners took their skills abroad they also took their sport, but it eventually lost ground to the rising public interest in Catch-as-catch-can.

Pushti/Shahi Dangal (Royal Wrestling)

Introduced by Asian immigrants and though not indigenous to England it is widely practiced and therefore worthy of note. Technically the same as Catch-as-catch-can or Free Style and Turkish Karakojak, a fall occurs when an opponent is turned upside down.

FINLAND

Vyopaini (Boltekast/Byxkast)

Wrestling with grips on the trousers is still practiced particularly in rural areas. Standing work only and victory when any part of an opponent's body touches the ground.

FRANCE

La Lutte Francaise (also called Greco-Roman)

Developed by a veteran of Napoleon's army called Exbrayat in the Midi where some form of wrestling had always been practised, it became popular in Lyons then soon after in Toulouse and Bordeaux. It was formally codified by Innocent

Truquettill whose rules were approved on 20th May 1848 by delegates from the Academies of Bordeaux, Arles, Lyons, Marseille, Toulouse, Nimes and Mauhors; the founders had insisted wrongly that in the ancient Olympics no tripping had been permitted so no attacks were permitted below the waist. Exbrayat at first called it, "A Mains Plates", (Open hands) perhaps to differentiate it from La Savate (French boxing) and to emphasise that striking was forbidden. It became more widely known as La Lutte Francaise and then Lutte Romaine, soon after this the name, "Greco-Roman" became the common usage in Bordeaux and Lyons. Greco-Roman became popular in Romany encampments and was practised by circus performers; major development came when it was publicised by challenge matches among professional strongmen, at first in France then, later, all over Europe and North America. It was the perfect vehicle for the burgeoning physical culture movement of the mid 19th century. Truquettill's simple wrestling style has eventually led to the steroid abuses of late 20th century professional Body building competitions, in fact the first ever body building competition of the modern era, a team competition was held at the Paris Exhibition of 1889 and was won by a group of touring Highland Games wrestlers and strongmen from Scotland led by Jimmy Esson of Aberdeen who in 1908 after winning a great tournament in the Alhambra Theatre in London was declared to be the Heavyweight Champion of the World in Catch-as-catch-can style. Greco-Roman quickly coalesced with the similar but more primitive styles practised in north Germany and Scandinavia, and a World and European Championship tournament was held in Vienna in August 1898. This first World Championship was won by George Hackenschmidt of Estonia, he weighed at that time 14st (89kgs) which belies the frequently repeated assertion by uninformed authors that competitions could only be won by enormous heavyweights who weighed a minimum of 100kgs. Burghardt of Austria was second and Michael Hitzler of Bavaria was third.

The following year a second World Championship tournament was held in Paris in November 1899 which was won by the veteran Frenchman Paul Pons, Hackenschmidt the favourite, had to withdraw due to a recurring shoulder injury. A great tournament was held in Moscow in 1900 for the Championships of St. Petersburg and Moscow which lasted forty days and which was won by George Hackenschmidt who was paid a salary of £100 per month plus enormous prize money for his victory. Hackenschmidt won the third World Championship tournament which was held in Vienna at Easter 1901, Halil Adali of Turkey was second and Paul Pons of France third. Another World Championship tournament commenced in the Casino de Paris in November 1901 with 130 competitors, it finished on December 27th when Hackenschmidt pinned Constant Le Boucher after a long and gruelling bout, Omer de Bouillon of France placed third.

Gustav Fristensky of Moravia won the European Championship tournament which was held in Rotterdam on February 9th 1903 and which had attracted 112 competitors, an idea of the prestige of Greco-Roman in Europe at this period can be gained from the fact that in 1919 Jan Masaryk the President of the newly formed Republic of Czeckoslovakia awarded him a 320 acre estate as a reward for his prowess as a wrestler and strongman.

Jess Pedersen of Denmark won the World Championship tournament which was held in the late summer of 1903 in Paris and Raoul Le Boucher placed second, Hackenschmidt was out of action due to a bout of rheumatism caused he said by the damp climate of Glasgow.

Greco Roman was included in the Olympic Games at Athens in 1896 but at first the amateur sport was of a very low standard, the first modern Olympic Champion was Carl Schuhmann of Germany who had already won three gold medals for gymnastics, on his way to the final he beat the Scot, Launceston Elliot who had won the gold medal for weightlifting. Schuhmann who was only 1.63m in height proved not for the last time that in wrestling skill and agility are more important than mere ponderous strength.

F.I.L.A. held its first World Championship in 1929. The rules of modern Greco-Roman wrestling which has the same points system as Olympic Free Style have been modified greatly since the first three simple paragraphs which were approved by the 350 enthusiasts present at the inaugural meeting in 1848.

(See Brittany & Corsica)

GERMANY

Rangeln and occasionally Hosenlumpf are still practised in Germany in the vicinity of the Austrian border in southern Bavaria.

GREECE

Palaima (Pali)

Standing work only with a fixed hold similar to the Backhold of Scotland and England, victory is won when any part of the opponent's body touches the ground.

Pehlivanlar Gures

This is practiced by the Turkish minority in the North and East and in Macedonia, it is exactly the same sport as the Karakojak of Turkey and is always accompanied by music.

GREENLAND

Wna Tag Tug

The Inuit (Eskimos) practice two types of wrestling at their Arctic Games, Wna Tag Tug consists of standing work only and victory is won by lifting an opponent off his feet. Tripping is forbidden.

"Musk Ox Wrestling"

Starts off by kneeling with the head under the opponent's shoulder and the object is to push him/her against the wall of the igloo or onto his feet.

ICELAND

Glima

Glima is officially recognised as the national sport of Iceland and consists of standing work only with a fixed hold on a special harness around the thighs. Prior

to 1900 the hold was taken on the trousers but when modern trousers proved too fragile the harness was adopted. Victory is won when certain parts of an opponent's body touch the ground and competition takes place in a limited area, uniquely, Glima takes place on bare floorboards and it is a foul to, "Follow through" with a throw. The Icelandic Glimasambund and Thorstein Einnarsson have now completed 30years research into the history and development of Glima which has changed little since the first settlement of Iceland 1,100 years ago. At Thingvellir the site of the ancient parliament there is an area called Fangbrekka where Glima competitions were held annually for eight centuries.

Hryggspenna

Standing work only with a fixed hold around the body with one arm under the opponents arm. No throws or trips are permitted, a primitive trial of strength.

Axlartok

Standing work only and a fixed hold, throwing techniques mainly use the legs, it is identical to the Backhold wrestling of Scotland and the North of England.

IRAN

Five styles of wrestling exist in Iran, several are almost identical with neighbouring countries and therefore come within the scope of this survey.

- a) *Kushti* or *National wrestling*, similar to Turkish Karakojak.
- b) *Kurdish wrestling* which is fought with rings is claimed by some to be the oldest form of wrestling in Iran and is found in the province of Khorassan.
- c) *Gilaki and Mazanderani* wrestling from the northern provinces.
- d) *Turkoman* wrestling from Turkmanistan, Takistan and Baluchistan.
- e) *Mountain wrestling*: popular amongst the tribal people and in some provinces.

The epic, *shahnama* by Firdawi which was printed in the Persian Shiraz in 1486 has an illustration of the bout between Rustim and Puladvand wrestling fully clothed and the *Gulistan* by Sa'adi printed in Bukhara in 1567 shows a number of pairs of wrestlers wearing breeches as seen in a modern Zurkhana or house of strength and in Turkey.

IRELAND

Coraiocht

Backhold wrestling almost identical to the wrestling of the western isles of Scotland was practised in Connemara, Galway and Donegal. The old rules were that the referee shouted as in the Hebrides, "Lamh an iochdair, lamh an uachdar" (one hand down, one hand up) and the wrestlers had to agree which arm was to be placed under the opponent's when taking the hold. Nowadays the wrestling has been standardised so that the right arm is always under the left. Traditional wrestling had almost died out and had become principally a children's game played after school but the, "Cuman Coraiocht Cheilteach na h'Eireann" is now working vigorously to revitalize it .

ITALY

The first club for Greco-Roman was founded in Genova in 1864 the "Societa Ginnastica Cristofor Columba" but there is no evidence that any other style of wrestling was practised as indigenous wrestling seems to have died out in Italy except in Sardinia (see Sardinia).

MACEDONIA

Pehlivanlar Wrestling

Identical with the wrestling of Turkey and the other Balkan States and is always accompanied by music. Rules were standardised about 1950.

PORTUGAL

Galhofa

Standing work only with a fixed hold, it is a similar primitive and undeveloped style to several others formerly to be found throughout the Iberian Peninsula and is still practised in three villages of the Province of Braganca on certain festival days.

ROMANIA

Trinta

The sport of the northern and mountainous regions. Standing work only and a fixed hold. Similar to the Backhold of Scotland and England.

Kures

The sport of the Danube plains, it is described as "handicap" wrestling in the F.I.L.A. history of 1952 but the authors believe it to be from the same family as Turkish wrestling.

SARDINIA

S'Istrumpa

Technically the same sport as the Backhold of England and Scotland with some minor differences in the rules and it is practised in the northern mountainous area. The sport had almost died out but in 1985 an association was formed in Ollalai which has worked with great vigour to revitalise S'Istrumpa, their first competition was held on the 25th/26th August 1985 in the village of San Bartolomeo, this organisation, la Polisportiva Barbagio di Ollalai, codified the sport and introduced weight classes for the first time. In 1994 due to the successful development of the sport it was decided to found a specialist body for the wrestling alone, to continue the enterprise of the Polisportiva Barbagio. The Federazione de S'Istrumpa was accepted as a member of the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling in 1995, competed in the European Championships in Carhaix that year and in April 1997 in Leon, Spain, Marino Columbu won the European 68kg Backhold championship.

SCOTLAND

Catch-as-catch-can

This the original form of Free Style with its distinctive 3 second pin fall was still practised at traditional Highland Games until about 1960/70 when it died out. The biggest audience ever attracted to a wrestling match in Scotland was a match

under Catch-as-catch-can rules between George Hackenschmidt and Alex. Monro the Scottish and British Champion on 28th October 1905. There were 20,000 spectators and if it had not been cold and wet the newspapers state that the audience would have doubled, Hackenschmidt won by two falls to nothing in 33mins. 50secs.

Loose Hold

Loose hold wrestling was practiced in central Scotland in the 19th century and gradually coalesced with the "Lancashire" rules except among the Travellers (nomads) among whom Loosehold continued until about 1980/85 and may occasionally still do so. In this variation there is no ground work. Victory is gained when any part of an opponent's body touches the ground

Backhold

Scottish Backhold though the same sport as is practiced in the North of England has slightly different rules. Backhold wrestling was widely practiced in the U.S.A. in the early 19th century and is thought by some historians to be the style practiced by Abraham Lincoln.

Carachd Uibhist (Uist wrestling in the Gaelic language)

Nowadays only practised in the Hebridean islands of North and South Uist and Benbecula. Hip throws are permitted but no tripping and the best of three falls wins a bout, a fixed hold is taken and a coin is tossed to decide which arm goes under if the wrestlers do not agree. This is almost the same primitive sport as Hryggspenna from Iceland, Slengjetak in Norway, Kragtag and Bondetag from Sweden. These sports at one time widely practiced in the Scandinavian countries must have contributed to the popularity of Greco-Roman style when it was first introduced there towards the end of the 19th century.

Carachd Bharraidh (Barra wrestling)

A Loose Hold style practised at festivals on the island of Barra, it includes ground work and victory is won when an opponent is forced, thrown or carried out of a restricted area.

SOVIET UNION (former)

Azerbaijanistan

Culeche

Almost identical to Turkish wrestling, special trousers are worn. Accompanied by music.

Kurdistan

Koureche

Similar to the Karakojak of Turkey

Georgia

Tchdaobe

Standing work only and a special jacket is worn, holds must be taken above the belt. Victory is won when an opponent is thrown on his back. Limited rounds and accompanied by music.

Armenia

Kokh

Standing work only, a special waistcoat and belt are worn. Victory is won when an opponent is thrown on his back. Accompanied by music.

Ukraine

Kourasse

Described as the wrestling style of the Cossacks in the F.I.L.A. publication of 1952, with standing work only and all holds taken on the belt, victory is won when the opponents body touches the ground. Hackenschmidt writes in his, "The Way to Live" that, "My acquaintance of the Russian style of wrestling with waist belts" helped him defeat Delhi Nielsen in a Cornish style challenge match in Australia in 1904, but states that tripping in Russian belt wrestling was forbidden. His comments confirm that the sport was practised at that time in Moscow and St. Petersburg and perhaps even Estonia. Other references in the 19th century describe a thigh and waist harness similar to Glima but state that the techniques were applied in a manner similar to Schwingen

Tadjikistan

Goughy

Special costume is worn, standing work only and victory is won when an opponent's body touches the ground

Turkestan

Goreche -as above.

"Ural" wrestling

Some communities practice a style of wrestling in which the competitors take hold on a scarf placed around their opponent's body, there is no ground work and victory is won when any part of the opponents body touches the ground.

Uzbekistan

Kourache

Special costume is worn and throws with the legs are not permitted. Victory is won when certain parts of an opponent's body touch the ground always, accompanied by music.

Sambo

Jacket wrestling was introduced into the Soviet secret police as a training exercise in 1923 by B.S. Oshchepkov, at first it was a purely practical military exercise and included training with improvised weapons but in 1938 it was codified by Anatoly Kharlampiev and turned into a modern sport. It proved to be immensely successful after it was made one of the sports of the Spartakiad as wrestlers from the traditional styles many of which used some type of jacket could adapt to it very quickly. Kharlampiev's reward from Stalin for his endeavours was to be shot in one

of the purges. Victory is by submission, a throw onto the shoulders or lifting an opponent above one's head. The name is constructed from, Samozash-chita (self defense) and the initial letters of , bez orizhiya (without weapons).

SPAIN

Baltu (Lucha Asturiana)

This style of wrestling has not yet been standardised, competitions in the western part of the Asturias are usually jacket wrestling with holds taken on the collars of the jacket but in the eastern counties particularly in the villages of N'Onis, Cabrales and Cangues d'Onis the wrestling is backhold style. Prior to each match the competitors must agree to which rules they will use. There seems to be no standard name for the sport but "Baltu" in the Asturian language of Babli is generally acceptable.

Lucha Canaria

Standing work only and a special shirt and shorts are worn, victory is when any part of an opponents body touches the ground and bouts are normally best of three falls. Technically it is loose hold wrestling once the initial fixed position is abandoned when the bout starts. Once the sport became standardised in 1946 after the wrestling associations of Las Palmas and Tenerife affiliated to the Spanish Wrestling Association (F.E.L.) it quickly lost many of the features described by 19th century writers as the distinctive customs and rule variations of each individual island were abandoned to the need for conformity. The system of starting a bout by placing the left hand above the other's right shoulder and the right hand down was adopted from Tenerife and it is an ancient feature of wrestling there, the shorts were adapted from the sash or cord formerly worn by Gran Canarian wrestlers on the right thigh to permit a hold to be taken and Lucha Corrida, that is wrestling for more than one fall was adopted.

Lucha Leonesa

Standing work only and a fixed hold is taken on a special belt. In the 19th century the hold was taken on the trousers but about 1920 the use of a belt was adopted, apparently two belts were sometimes used at first in a manner similar to Icelandic Glima. Some villages formerly considered a victory was won only when the two shoulders were held on the ground and there was some primitive ground work but the sport was standardised in the early 20th century and the ground work techniques were abandoned before they could be fully developed.

SWEDEN

Ryggtag

Still takes place on the island of Gotland as the final event of their summer sports and is the same primitive Backhold style of wrestling as Hryggspenna from Iceland.

Byxkast or Balgtag

Probably the original Glima and it was still practiced in rural Sweden in the 1970's. No recent information is available.

SWITZERLAND

Schwingen

The earliest reference to Schwingen was in 1215, it consists of standing and ground work, victory is won by pinning the opponents two shoulders to the ground and bouts normally take place on piles of sawdust. Commencing holds are taken on the special canvas shorts worn and with this exception the sport is technically similar to free style. The champion wrestler is given the title "King of the Mountains", since 1750 major competitions have taken place on Easter Monday and the first textbook on the sport was published in 1864.

Leibringen

A fixed hold is taken as in Hryggspenna and it is a similar primitive trial of strength.

Rutzen

Standing work only and special shorts are worn, holds are taken on any part of the body and victory is gained when the opponent's body touches the ground.

Hosenlumpf

Standing work only and the winner is the first to win three falls.

TURKEY

Karakojak/Yagle Gures

Standing and ground work with holds taken on any part of the opponent's body or the special leather trousers which are worn. Victory is when an opponent is turned upside down, there is no time limit or rounds and Karakojak is always accompanied by music. When wrestlers are smeared with olive oil it is called Yagle Gures, otherwise rules are as Karakojak. The ground work techniques of Turkish wrestling had a major influence on the technical development of Olympic Free Style particularly the techniques known in Turkish as Sarma, (grapevine) Ters Sarma (reverse grapevine) and Kunde, (hobble) matches are always accompanied by musicians. The Kirkpinar tournament in Edirne is the oldest wrestling competition in Europe and has been held annually since 1361, Edirne was captured by the Ottoman Turks prior to their conquest of Constantinople. (Istanbul). The winner of the Kirkpinar (forty wells) is called the Baspehlivan

Kurdistan:

Zoran Bazi

Rules are as in Karakojak

GROUP B : National or regional styles which are extinct or about which the authors have no reliable information.

DENMARK

Wrestling was practised in the Higher Schools in 1800 and competitions were held in Himmel-Bjerget and Tivoli in 1850. The wrestling in the earlier period must have been one of the Scandinavian styles perhaps Brydning or Livtag (the same as Icelandic Hryggspena) since Greco-Roman or French wrestling was only codified in 1848. Saxo Grammaticus (1220 AD) wrote *Historica Danica* in Latin and there are three ambiguous references to wrestling but no technical details.

ENGLAND

The oldest reference to wrestling dates from before the Saxon Conquest of Roman Britain (modern England) when the Emperor Gratian in 375 AD is described as being a good wrestler and runner. A number of carvings in churches, drawings and book illustrations have survived from the mediaeval period illustrating four types of wrestling, with holds taken on scarfs around the neck and shoulders, the collar and belt, the waistband of the trousers and a backhold but there is no known reference to any of the rules. Edward 1st, (1239-1307) the greatest of the Plantagenet kings was described as, "A lover of music, poetry and chess, crusader, hunter, wrestler and master in the lists, the envy and delight of European chivalry".

Catch-as-Catch-Can

Sinclair in, *The History of Wigan*, states that in 1570 special tight jerseys or jackets were worn for wrestling but that, "The Lower Orders not being able to afford these they normally wrestled in the nude state with the exception of drawers". See *Loosehold*

Catchhold Style

Bouts were started by taking a "Referee's Hold" (on the head and arm), no attacks were permitted below the waist and victory was gained when any part of an opponent's body touched the ground, it was last practised about 1900.

Loosehold

As late as 1880/90 there were four distinct "schools" of Loosehold wrestling each with slightly different rules, by 1900 all had merged with Lancashire Style or Catch-as-Catch-Can wrestling. Under the "professional rules" which existed till about 1930 finger breaking was considered a legitimate counter and a peculiar hand grip was used to prevent this, the amateur rules had always permitted finger interlacing but this was barred by F.I.L.A. in 1921. The style had become a predominantly amateur sport by about 1930 due to the growing corruption of the professional sport and the old and distinctive rules quickly disappeared under the influence of the international rules enforced by F.I.L.A., particularly when the 'Touch Fall' was imposed in 1921 at French insistence despite opposition from the English speaking countries.

A last effort was made in 1946 to regularise and control professional wrestling which had by this time degenerated into a farce and a committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Admiral Lord Mount-Evans. Proper professional Catch-as-Catch-Can rules which allowed submission holds were agreed but the experiment was not a success as the sport by that date was too corrupt and the 'professionals' quickly slipped back into fake , "All-in" shows.

Devon Style

Indistinguishable from Cornish Wrestling except for the brutal practice of wearing clogs or shoes sometimes reinforced with metal and hacking at the opponent's shins. Agreement was reached about 1880 to discontinue the practice and the style merged with Cornish wrestling, the last competitions in Devon were held about 1960

Hickling (Derbyshire Hickling; in Lancashire it is called, Purring)

A brutal sport which was still in existence about twenty years ago and probably still exists, it was often practised in mining communities. A fixed hold was taken on the jacket, heavy reinforced boots were worn and kicking was permitted below the knee. Victory was won by the opponent's submission, breaking hold or any part of his body touching the ground. There were a number of fatalities in the late 19th century and the activity went underground".

Norfolk Style (Cotswold Wrestling)

A jacket style which is now extinct, the only difference between it and Cornish style was that two joints had to hit the ground at once and not three as is the Cornish practice.

Shooting

A variant of Catch-as-Catch-Can wrestling, victory is by gaining a submission or the loser being unable to continue due to injury. Information is difficult to obtain as matches are held in gambling clubs and were often used in the past among professional "show" wrestlers to decide in private who would claim to be "champion". Sky T.V. now broadcasts contests billed as "Shooting", these matches which are similar to the Pancration of ancient Greece may not always be genuine.

Sidehold Wrestling

Contestants stood by side and a fixed hold was taken on a special leather harness. Victory was gained when an opponent was thrown to the ground with three joints landing at the same time as in Cornish Style. Contests were held in Europe and particularly the U.S.A. during the 19th and early 20th century.

FAROE ISLANDS

Three kinds of wrestling are known to have existed in the Faroes. Axlartok ("shoulder-grips"), thought to have been the same as Broeratok ("brother's grip"),

waist-holds (same as Icelandic Hryggspenna) and Brokatok ("trouser-grips"). All these forms were practised for entertainment. The term used for all three, at glimast, refers to a friendly activity.

FINLAND (Swedish-Sw- and Finnish-F- speaking sectors)

Several types of wrestling were formerly practised in the Swedish and Finnish-speaking areas, these are:

Livtag (Sw) - *rintapaini* (F) (backhold)
Famnkast (Sw) - *ristipaini* (F) (trouser-grips)
Ryggkast (Sw) - *ryssankosti* (F) (loose-grips)
Kragtag (Sw) - *kauluspaini* (F) (collar-hold)
Armtag (Sw) - *soulipaini* (F) (arm-hold)

FRANCE

Many mediaeval carvings of wrestlers exist in France especially from the 12th and 13th centuries and most are to be found in the area from Bordeaux to Poitiers but no details of the rules or of the careers of any of the wrestlers survived into the 19th century when the development of La Lutte Francaise in its modern form began. Bordeaux is often referred to as the cradle of wrestling but Toulouse was originally almost equally prominent in the development of modern French wrestling, however, the majority of wrestlers active in Paris when competitions commenced in the arena of La Rue Montesquieu in 1848 came from the Midi where some form of wrestling had always been practised and at that time the newly codified Lutte Francaise was at the peak of its popularity.

GERMANY

In the works of Roman historians dating back to 334 BC there are numerous accounts of physical activities including wrestling of the Teutons, Cimmerians, Goths and Germans. Later descriptions of these skills can be found in such heroic epics as the Niebelungenlied (1190) and the Lays of Gudrun (1215).

During the 15th and 16th centuries four books one illustrated by Albert Duror were published. These books depicted methods of unarmed combat, skills vital to the mediaeval knight, yet, in the same period wrestling as a sport was also written about in, "Ringer Kunst : funff und achtig".

Despite the very sophisticated techniques illustrated 300 years earlier, German Wrestling or Ortodoxen Ringen of the northern states in the mid 19th century was very similar to La Lutte Francaise except that it was forbidden to turn your back to an opponent which meant that the majority of throwing techniques were not possible. Wrestlers were not permitted to join their hands around the opponent's body although they were permitted to grasp their own wrist. The sport seems to have been very similar to Scandinavian styles but, with the addition of ground work as in France.

GREECE

Wrestling may have become an Olympic event at the 18th Olympic Games (704BC) but only two styles seem to have been used, Orthopali from the beginning and later, Pancration. The oldest statue to honour a wrestler at Olympia is dated 628 BC and for Pancration the earliest is 536 BC.

Orthopali

Standing work only, (Loosehold wrestling) the contestant who touched the ground with any part of the body first was the loser; victory was gained when an opponent had been thrown three times. This was the most popular style and was competed in at all the ancient Olympic Games. The martial origin of Olympic events was emphasised in the wrestling by the extra esteem gained by the winner who threw his opponent cleanly and did not also finish up on the ground, such a wrestler was called, "*He who is not covered in dust*"

Alindissis

Standing and ground work, victory was by gaining a submission according to "rules" similar to modern "shootng" but without blows.

Acrochirismos

Standing and ground work, described as similar to Pancration (F.I.L.A.1952) but techniques were apparently applied on hands and fingers. Victory by submission.

Pancrace (Pancration)

Standing and ground work; a brutal event with a mixture of boxing, wrestling and kicking. Victory by submission.

ICELAND

Lausatok (Loosehold)

A bout was started by gripping the collar and a sleeve at the elbow, twenty-four techniques have been recorded. Victory was gained by throwing an opponent to the ground. It was considered an inferior sport to glima.

Hryggspena

In ancient times this type of wrestling was sometimes used for trials of combat to settle territorial disputes, in such instances a "slaying" stone was used and the combatants tried to bend their opponent backwards over a specially placed sharp stone to break his back. One such stone still stands at the farm of Hringsdalur in Western Iceland.

Sviptingar

Competitors gripped each other by the sleeves and tried to overbalance each other without body contact

IRELAND

Collar and Elbow Wrestling (Square Hold Wrestling) has been revived in Ireland but its survival is fragile. This style of wrestling was very popular in the U.S.A. in

the 18th and early 19th centuries, General George Washington was a noted exponent in his youth. The style declined rapidly after 1890 probably due to the rising popularity of Catch-as-catch-can; bouts were sometimes won on the first down to lose principle, at other times victory was gained by two joints touching the ground or as in Cornish wrestling when three joints hit the ground at the same time.

The earliest reference in Irish literature refers to the hero Cuchulainn putting on a belt to wrestle. The annual Taillteinn festival (632 BC to 1169 AD) included wrestling but no technical details are known. Several carved crosses of the 8th/10th century illustrate what seems to be jacket wrestling.

ITALY (see Sardinia)

NETHERLANDS

A sophisticated book called "Wurstle Kunst" (wrestling science) was published in Amsterdam in 1674, it has seventy one illustrations by Romeyne de Hooge. Despite this the sport seems to have died out until the 19th century when Greco Roman wrestling was popularised due to the activities of professional strongmen at fairs and theatres.

NORWAY

Scholars believe that until about 1300 the same physical activities were practised in Norway as are described in the Icelandic sagas but from 1400 to 1800 the Norwegians historians paid little attention to sports. Sources from this period refer to famntakarar or wrestlers who travelled from district to district and wrestled at markets and festivals.

In De Sandvigske Samlinger, Maihaugen, in Lillehammer there is an interesting statuette from Lom in Gudbrandsdal dating from the 12th century, the statuette depicts two wrestlers. The figures are slightly bent and stand slightly to the right of each other looking over each other's shoulder, right cheek to right cheek. Both place the left foot slightly in front of the opponent's right foot with the right hand gripping high on the trousers above the thigh and the left hand gripping the trouser leg on the thigh. All of this resembles the grips and stance in modern Glima. These wooden figures are an interesting Norwegian bridge between an ancient wrestling form of Sweden and Finland in the East and Iceland in the West. There is no evidence, however, on whether this form of wrestling used throws like the Celtic forms or was a primitive trial of strength as in some of the Swedish and Finnish forms. Up to the beginning of this century three types of folk wrestling survived in Norwegian rural areas. These are :

Armesloengja (Slengjetak) Identical to Icelandic Lausatok

Ryggjekneppa (Ryggetak) Identical to Icelandic Hryggspena

Buksetak (Broktak)

A fixed hold was taken on the trousers, after that it became a primitive trial of strength as in Hryggspena.

SARDINIA

A Francas/A Brazzos

In this style a hold was taken on the opponents collar when wearing a jacket or on the upper arms when no garment was worn. Once an equal hold was taken the object was to throw an opponent to the ground using leg and arm techniques without body contact. The sport was last practised about 1970.

SCOTLAND

Scots Style (Dinnie Style)

Stated by many authorities to have been invented by the famous strong man Donald Dinnie about 1870 when he introduced ground work into Scottish wrestling after his failure to consistently beat the more skilled wrestlers from the North of England on the lucrative Highland Games circuit. The style was properly codified in 1930 by W. Carmichael but has not been practised since about 1939. A bout commenced as in Backhold and when a throw occurred, wrestling continued as in Catch-as-Catch-Can until a pin was gained. Three carved stones exist from the 7th/9th centuries which clearly depict wrestling, two show Backhold and one shows Loosehold. Domhnuil Gruamach, Lord of the Isles, the sea kingdom of the Hebrides, erected a gymnasium on the island of North Uist around 1400 AD at Parc na Claidhaimh or Park of the Swords to enable his "strongmen" and wrestlers to train, this building "Tigh Sunndas" or house of sport was the first building known to have been erected in Scotland specifically for sport.

SPAIN

La Loita was practiced in Galicia with similar rules to the *Galhofa* of Portugal but seems to have died out in this century.

La Lucha de Bandera o de la Cruz

A type of Backhold which died out due to the repressions after the Civil War which also destroyed many other traditional games, it was last practised about 1940 and originates from Zamora in the north of the Province of Salamanca. One theory as to the origin of this style is that the semi nomadic shepherds saw the Scots regiments wrestling during the Peninsular war and copied them, but, it is much more likely to have been a variant of Lucha Leon which in its various forms seems to be the indigenous style of the Peninsula. Tripping was not permitted and victory was only gained when an opponent was thrown onto his back. Like many other pastoral styles most competitions took place at fetes, meetings or markets as the result of challenges from one group to another or from one individual to all and sundry rather than at formally organised tournaments. The name La Lucha de Bandero o de la Cruz is derived from the practice of groups of shepherds raising a flag at their campsite in order to announce their presence and as a challenge to wrestle.

Lucha del Roncal

Similar to Lucha de la Bandera O de la Cruz and formerly practised only in the valley of Roncal in the Pyrennees.

SWITZERLAND

Kragenringen

Standing work only, a fixed hold was taken with both hands on the collars. A primitive style and victory was gained by twisting or forcing an opponent to the ground.

WALES (Pays de Galle)

Collar and Elbow and a jacket wrestling similar to Cornish style were practised in South Wales in the 19th century. Jacket wrestling still existed as late as the 1940's but is now extinct. North Wales has a form of Backhold in which intermittent competitions are still held.

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A REVOLUTION OF BODY CULTURE? Traditional Games on the way from modernization to “Post-Modernity”

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In 1989 dramatic events changed Eastern Europe. The peoples' revolution was not restricted to the political level. In the fields of sport and youth culture, body culture and every day life the change had already been on the way. (About the Soviet Union see: Riordan 1990; about GDR: Eichberg 1990). Three events from 1989 can give an idea of the variety of movements.

"Qilaatersorneq - Drum Dance" was the headline of the leader in the Greenland *Atuagagdliutit - Grønlandsposten*. The newspaper was commenting on the meeting of Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) in Sisimiut (Greenland) in summer 1989. For the first time in history, such a conference united Inuit (Eskimo) representatives from four polar states, - not only from Canada and Alaska (USA), but also from Soviet Siberia. This could be seen as a step forward of an "Arctic Revolution" towards decolonization. The paper's leader underlined the dramatical, sensational and historical character of this political event. But its headline referred rather to an event of body culture: drum dance. Because the Siberian Inuit came with drums in their hands. Their drum practice had been banned as "reactionary", "religious" and "separatist" for many decades. Now drums sounded through the whole week of the conference, emotionally moving the participants to tears. The meeting found its culmination in music and dance at its centre, uniting for the first time ever people from all parts of the Inuit nation - from Soviet Chukotka in the Far West to the autonomous Greenland in the East - in their common traditional ceremony.

Drum dance is the very ancient centre piece of Inuit festivity culture, a dance of laughter and enjoyment, play and display as well as an instrument of conflict solution - by duel dancing -and a technique of shamanic ecstatic healing (Eichberg 1989c). In this case - in Sisimiut in summer 1989 - drum dance appeared in its new political context, being a corporal manifestation of modern national identity, of Inuit identity. In the festival it appeared also in its new musical connection, side by side, with keyboard songs, Country and Western music, choral song in Christian missionary tradition and last not least rock music bringing all the congress participants into movement. But it was drum dance that moved them to tears and marked - also on the paper's front pages - the emotional mood and significance of the Inuit meeting. By drums and dance, collective identity was expressed corporally.

Drum Dance, Sokol and a Defeat of Sportive Nation Building

Another event from 1989: In the month of May, Polish activists from the "Clubs of Physical Education" and young people from the movement "Light-Life" met in order to discuss and decide the re-establishment of the gymnastic organisation Sokol. Thus, a classical phenomenon of both Polish nationalism and Polish body culture re-emerged from the historical underground. The Polish Sokol ("Falcon") was founded in Galicia in 1867 as a part of nationalist and Pan-Slavic gymnastic movements in several Eastern European Slavic countries. Later on it became a base for the National Democratic Party in Poland and in the time between the wars a part of the extreme Right as a sort of paramilitary corps.

After 1945 the Sokol was, therefore, prevented from reappearing, its property and its facilities were transferred to the state sports federation or to communal cultural centres. But in the years of martial law following the coup de main of 1981, things changed. In 1984 the authorities of Krakow registered a "Sokol centre". In which degree this resulted from nationalist opposition press from below or rather from the military patriotic stabilisation strategy from above, from the side of the Jaruzelski regime, is difficult to decide from outside. Maybe the different interests mixed and united in the common project to counteract the crisis of the so-called "August generation" which was marked by political resignation, social decrease, deterioration of the health condition in the context of ecological constraints, psychical depression and - in general - "social pathology" (Bogusz 1988).

Five years later, now, it was possible to officially re-establish the gymnastic federation. In the "General weekly" (Tygodnik Powszechny), the organisational committee of the new Sokol declared frankly, that "the ideological programme and the statutes... have been edited referring to materials from before the Second World War, which have been kept carefully by the members". - Again, nationalism and body culture, historical reminiscence and political change were linked to each other.

A third case: When in October/November 1989 the Eastern European revolt reached the German Democratic Republic, the universities reacted quickly by declaring important changes. The chancellor of the Humboldt University in East Berlin expressed the need "to butcher the holy cows whose death has been demanded for several years". He summarised this change by referring to three measures. The obligatory Russian language education was abolished. The courses in Marxist Leninist ideology received other philosophical content and were no longer marked by points. And sport was dropped as an obligatory subject and became voluntary (Hass 1989).

The role of sport as one of the so-called holy cows - side by side with Russian language and Marxism-Leninism - is not surprising. It can be understood with the background of the preceding sport politics of the communist party. By the presen-

tation of international sport results, the "socialist nation" of GDR was to prove its existence, - nation building by the means of sport. Indeed, what failed in other fields - democratic consent, economic production, cultural glamour - succeeded in the field of sport, as it was quantitatively readable from the Olympic ranking list. Thus, sport became a sanctuary of state-patriotic effort, protected by strict taboo against every principal criticism. Only in literary fictional form, the critique of sport could be articulated, as Erich Loest (1978) and Christoph Hein (1982) did in some of their novels. But in fact, there was a broader popular aversion against the politics of sport, breaking finally through with the revolution of 1989 by sharp attacks against the privileges of the sporting elite. But at the same time the "butchering of the holy cows" at the universities made clear that the critique was directed not only against the top sports.

As with the Polish sokol gymnastics and the Inuit drum dance, the ties between the national question and body culture became visible in Germany, too, but in distinctive forms. Both the notion of nation building from above as well as its defeat from beneath manifested themselves in the fields of sport.

Nationalisation and Body Culture - A Historical Panorama

The relationship between national identity and body culture is not a new phenomenon. It is, however, not ancient, archaic and universal either. But it can be documented in a series of structural changes and innovations since the emergence of modern popular nationalisation in the late 18th century. A number of cases which have been documented and studied more in-depth can be identified:

The German Gymnastics of Turnen appeared in the years after 1810, in connection with the fight against the Napoleonic occupation of the country. In the early years and up to the revolution of 1848 Turnen constituted the broadest mass base of the German nationalisation, outdoing by far the choral societies and the organisations of student nationalism (Schröder 1967, Düding 1984).

Among the Slavic peoples of Eastern Europe, the German Turner movement gave rise to corresponding national gymnastic efforts. The Sokol movements starting among the Czechs in 1862 took over several forms of exercises, but turned the gymnastic nationalism against its German political content (Recla 1931, Blecking 1987).

Zionist national movement and Jewish gymnastics were also linked to each other from the beginning in the 1890s. Under Nazi repression it was especially the Jewish sport which maintained a protecting network for the Jewish community in Germany (Wertheimer 1937, Bennett 1978).

Ling gymnastics in Sweden is often regarded as a nationally neutral and strictly scientifically based, physiological anatomical model of exercise. In fact, it arose

around 1800/1810 in the context of the Nordic Götiska (Gothic) movement, the Swedish version of intellectual national romanticism (Sandblad 1985, Korsgård 1986a)

In Denmark the gymnastic movement was related to the romantic nationalism of quite another social class. With inspiration from Swedish Ling gymnastics, the folkelig (popular) gymnastics started in 1884 on the base of the farmers' democratic nationalist network and of their Grundtvigian folk academies (Korsgård 1982, 1986a, 1986b).

In Iceland it was a national youth movement which - from around 1900 - essentially contributed to the carrying through of sports. An important role in this process was played by the ancient wrestling style of glima (Einarsson 1988).

The different forms of Celtic wrestling - Breton gouren, Scottish backhold and others - were not only historically related to Icelandic wrestling, but their renaissance and transformation was, in a comparable way, linked to regionalist and nationalist cultural movements. This is especially visible by the activity of the druid Dr. Cotonnec, the founder of the gouren organisation in 1928 (La Borderie 1988, Trévédy 1890, Cotonnec 1935, Creston 1957, Le Bris 1976, Jaouen 1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1986). In Brittany the indigenous wrestling has pushed the traditional games into the background of nationalist attention, but actually their significance is rising (Royant 1981, Carret 1983, Guillou 1985, Peru 1985, 1986, Floc'h 1987). The same is true for the traditional Breton ball game soule (Gougard 1911/12, Ogès 1947, Moëlo 1986).

In Ireland, on the other hand, whilst Celtic wrestling disappeared it was Gaelic athletics and the game of hurling that towed the nationalist emotions. The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) from 1884 became the mass base of militant Republican resistance to the British colonisation (Hörbe 1983).

The Scottish Highland Games had - from 1819 on - a certain significance for the rise of the new Scottish nationalism (Webster 1973, Novacek 1989). But at the same time, the Caledonian Games in North America showed that this type of sportive festival culture did not automatically lead to an ethnic-political nationalisation (Redmond 1971, 1982)

In the Valley of Aosta it were traditional cast and bat games organised in sport clubs of modern type since 1920, which contributed to the process of ethnic identity of the Franco-Provencal minority. Tsan, rebatta, fiolet and palet, thus, constituted a body cultural equivalent to the valley's political autonomy, realised after 1945 (Daudry 1981-90, Godio 1985, Dettori 1990).

Whilst nationalist and regionalist sports movements have, in the most of the cases, tended towards a sort of uncoupling, emancipation or separatism, forming own

sportive identities on a smaller scale, in English sport the reverse case of sporting colonialism is to be found. The connection of English sport -mainly ball games - with British colonial expansion, imperialism and upper-class education has been documented in great detail (Mangan 1986).

All in all, over a period of 200 years we see a picture of rising nationalisation and national sportive differentiation. Hence, industrial modernity is not only characterised by a universal standardisation and homogenisation of sport and body culture, corresponding to the uniforming effects of the industrial system (Eichberg 1973, 1978, 1986). At the same time, a counteracting, subversive tendency towards multiplicity has always been conspicuous, breaking through especially in social historical situations of societal change and unrest, such as in the early 19th century and in the years between 1900 and the 1920s.

The Differentiation of Folk Sports - An International Panorama

Is all this just a historical reminiscence? The revolution in Eastern Europe with its break-down of the colonising state-sports system gives another answer. From now, the political situation demands a new attention for the dialectics of uniformization and multiplicity. Seen from this perspective, recent tendencies of change in Western Europe, too, can appear in a new light. Again, some facts and developments shall be collected in a panorama.

On the international level, a new wave of international competitions and sport festivals started in the 1980ies. In May 1985 the first Games of the Small Countries in Europe (Jeux des Petits États d'Europe) was arranged in San Marino. Under the sponsorship of the International Olympic Committee IOC, the games collected participants from San Marino (20.000 inhabitants) Monaco (25.000), Liechtenstein (26.000), Andorra (38.000), Iceland (240.000), Malta (330.000), Luxemburg (365.000) and Cyprus (632.000). Among the "giants" of the competitions were, therefore, nations which have no chance at the Olympic Games. But in other respects, the small states' games were a true copy of the Olympic Games, both in the sport disciplines and competition patterns, in symbols (Olympic rings), ceremony and ideology.

One month later, in July 1985 the first Inter-Island Games took place on the Isle of Man. The participants came from Åland (23.000 inhabitants), Anglesey (68.000), Faerø (44.000), Froya (45.000), Gotland (53.000), Guernsey (54.000), Hitra (4.500), Iceland (240.000), Isle of Man (65.000), Isle of Wight (120.000), Jersey (76.000), Malta (330.000), Orkney (19.000), Shetland (8.000) and St. Helena (5.500). Again, there were pure international standard sports on the programme (athletics, badminton, cycling, shooting, soccer, swimming, volley-ball) as well as Olympic type ceremonies and medal tables. Traditional Manx dances at the opening ceremony and the games' symbol -using the ancient Celtic triskell -

showed, however, into another direction of possible development. The second games were given to Guernsey (Isle of Man 1985).

Again in the same year, the first Eurolympics of the Small Peoples and Minorities (Eurolympiade der Kleinen Völker und Minderheiten) were hosted by Friesland in the Netherlands. 400 participants came from Brittany, Cornwall, Elsass-Lothringen, Belgic and French Flanders, Friesland, Lappland, the Molucs and Räto-Romania, all these being peoples without a state of their own. Here also, gold, silver and bronze medals were given, but the practical activities consisted of three different types:

- classical standard sports, as athletics, football and volley-ball,
- traditional sports and games from the participants' ethnic cultures, as Celtic wrestling, Frisian Streifvogelen and Frisian regatta,
- cultural competitions, as singing.

These games, therefore, included an alternative view on the multiplicity of sport culture (Frühling 1986, p.56-58).

In prolongation of this concept, for June 1988 the First Spring of South European Games (Premier Printemps des Jeux de l'Europe du Sud) was planned in Corsica. Participants from France, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain were called to show their indigenous traditional games and sports: tambourine ball game from Italy and Languedoc, tsan and other bat games from Aosta Valley, water joust from Lyon and Givors, human pyramid gymnastics from Catalonia, stick fights from Portugal, pelota from Euzkadi (Spanish and French Basque land) and the war dance mauresce (muresca) from Corsica and Serra Grecque. But in spite of the sponsorship of Unesco and the International Fund for The Development of Physical Education and Sport (Fideps), this alternative type of sport and game festival was blocked at the last moment by changed political strategies (Sports et Traditions 1988).

At this stage of sport festivals, some points of contact turn up with - on the one side - festivals of folklore and - on the other side - international festivals of dance and music. Among these, the Inter-Celtic Festival (Festival Interceltique) in Lorient has had special significance also for sports. It started in 1970 as a week of dance and music in Lorient (Brittany) with participation from all the Celtic Nations: Alba (Scotland), Breizh (Brittany), Cymru (Wales), Eire (Ireland), Kernow, (Cornwall) and Mannin (Isle of Man) and in recent years also from Galicia (in Spain). Recently, Celtic wrestling and traditional Breton competitions have played a more and more significant role (Festival Interceltique 1988).

It was, perhaps, this type of cultural festival and arrangement, which UNESCO in 1983 projected in its Major Programme of Education. Under its chapter V.4. "Promotion of physical education and sport", UNESCO demanded initiatives on three levels:

- sport: national (states) strategies and plans for rising the standards of training,

-sport for all: promotion of health, fitness, recreation and training for democracy - in co-operation with the World Health Organisation,
-traditional games and dances: protection and development of national heritage and cultural activities - by the initiative of youth movements.

Seen from the perspective of these three dimensions of physical activity, sport and body culture, the new festivals starting in the 1980s showed a tendency from the first towards the last. This may not conceal, however, that Olympic type sport, producing results under standardised conditions, is still the dominating pattern.

Paralleling the international competitions and festivals, a new form of international research emerged in the 1980s. One of the first initiatives came from a French-Danish-German network of researchers, today under the title of International Institute for Body Anthropology (Institut International d'Anthropologie Corporelle, IIAC), which arranged its first seminar in November 1987 in Brittany, continued 1988 in Gerlev (Denmark) and 1989 in Saggrian (West Germany) (Eichberg 1990c).

In November 1988, a seminar under the Council of Europe in Vila Real (Portugal) looked at "traditional games" and resulted in plans for a general catalogue or inventory for their registration (Dufaitre 1989). On a regional level, a conference about Nordic Sports assembled researchers from Denmark, Finland, Faerøer, Iceland, Norway, Saamiland and Sweden in Gerlev, in October 1988. Here, as under the IIAC, more theoretical and political questions about the relations between body culture and national or regional identity were in the focus of interest (Eichberg 1989a). The same interest may influence the development of sport geography, having appeared as a new discipline in the 1980s (Bale 1986).

Some National Case Situations: Eastern and Western Europe...

Both the international competitions and the international research interests are not accidental or independent variables.

They form a sort of superstructure above a range of societal situations that could be observed at national and regional levels.

In Eastern Europe, the Soviet system was based on a general disrespect for popular games and folk sports. These were regarded as being:

- linked with religious cults or celebrations,
- bound to ethnic nationalism or separatism,
- pre-industrial and archaic-ritualistic from out their origin and pattern of life,
- far from the result-related functions of modern sport, such as fitness, discipline and work co-operation and thus
- in conflict with social and economic modernisation generally.

There seem to have existed only two exceptions where traditional games and sports were allowed or promoted. The one exception: They could be accepted as a sort of preparation for international top sport. In this way, the traditional Trans-Caucasian wrestling forms as Georgian chidaoba, Azerbaidshan goulesh and Armenian kokh were used as preparation steps for Soviet sambo and international judo; several world champions, European champions and top athletes on the Olympic level developed in this way (Chatschkowanjan 1972).

The other exception: Two traditional games from the Russian ethnic culture were accepted and transformed into organised sport disciplines, included in the state-wide classification list and streamlined with unified rules, federations and championships of their own. Gorodki, a throwing game in family with bowls or curling, was sportified since 1923, lapta, a ball game related to baseball, since 1958 (Riordan 1986/87).

The recent transformations in Soviet society happened in parallel with alternative movements in the world of sport, especially in the field of youth culture. One can expect that some special Russian traits will emerge - as well as some exotic imports, especially from East Asia (Riordan 1989, 1990). In the Non-Russian republics inside the Soviet Union, the conscience about one's own national body culture has never disappeared and will revive in measure with the general emancipation process. Examples can be the traditional games and sports of Georgia, chidaoba wrestling, riding games, archery and others (Robakidse 1955, Elashvily 1959, Natschkebiya 1964).

From Kazakhstan in Soviet Central Asia similar practical tendencies and theoretical attentions are reported. Traditional games of riding and wrestling (audaryspak) and shooting with bow and arrow (zhamby atu), related to nomadic life at the cross road between Mongolian and Turkish cultures, had to some degree disappeared under the social changes on the 20th century. Others were repressed because of their relations to shamanism or to "separatist nationalism". Recent developments however, have favoured new practices of the old games, for example in connection with the New Year celebration (Nauryz) in the month of March. But also erotic games find a new interest as it is the case with ak suiek (the game of the white bone): Two teams of young people, girls and boys, try in the warm summer night to find a bone, which is thrown by a referee as far as possible into the steppe. The one who has found the bone, runs with loud shouting back to the referee. But the rival team members try to take the bone away from him. Both teams get involved in the fight for the possession of the bone. Some participants, however are searching other experiences and get lost - in pairs - in the vast steppes...

As a Mongolian writer described it: "At this delightful short summer night the way out finds all the energy and joy, accumulated during a long winter. Youngsters await these days during a whole year and get a due reward. On these moonlit nights children grow into youth, and young boys and girls get to know magic

sweetness of the first love. This summer night with its pure moon light and a gorgeous meadow, which accumulated so much of sincere happiness of a youngster, will for ever remain in the memory of those who at least once knew its pleasure."

Evidently, the traditional games are related to emotions and realities, that have survived the change of their so called societal "functions". And they are taking up new ones (Chusainov 1990).

In Western Europe, some parallel processes have occurred. Three examples show, however, some very different body cultural configurations as initial patterns of national distinction. The Basque games and contests, developing in reciprocal effect with the political strife after national autonomy, form a special pattern of strength competition (Franco 1978). In the Valley of Aosta, as already remarked, bat games are fundamental to identity related sport culture (Daudry 1981-90). In Flanders -again distinctive - games from the towns' inn culture as well as children's games have been developed towards an own national profile. Academic research in this field, which in Flanders has a tradition for twenty years already, has, however, been rather reluctant to show the connections between the recent transformations in body culture and the political dimensions of national identity (Nieuwsbrief 1981 ff, Renon 1979 ff, 1981, De Vroede 1986).

For the case of Brittany, one has described in detail, how traditional games and sport together with traditions of music, dance and festivity constitute an essential factor of economic development. The language and the body are fundamental for regional and national economy (Denez 1988).

Portugal, being one of the very few European nation states without national or ethnic minorities, has at the same time been the only state in Europe to develop initiatives for research and practical promotion of traditional games (Soares 1980). National conservative as well as popular communist incentives are working in this field, sometimes converging and sometimes struggling against each other.

... The North, Some Fourth World Cultures...

In the Nordic countries, traditional games have been registered both by an older positivist research (Götlind 1933, Stejskal 1954) and by recent ethnology (Hellspong 1989). There has been but very little effort to relate these activities to modern sport activities and modern cultural identity, with the exception of Icelandic glima wrestling. Recent research in Denmark, however, combined with the practice of a "living sports museum" points into a new direction, where historical tradition of body culture is transformed into actual practical alternative (Møller 1984, 1990, Eichberg 1985).

Among the Saami (Lapps), by contrast, it is Western sport that has formed the base for national separation - in their own organisations rather than in own types of activity (Pedersen/Rafoss 1989). The Saami traditions are, instead, significant for other fields of culture, in jazz and rock music, in theatre and in healing where the Saami shamanism reappears as body cultural practice (Eriksson 1988/89).

Similar developments happened in Greenland Inuit culture. The Greenland Sport Federation is an independent organisation, but in its content a true copy of its colonial great brother, the Danish Sport Federation. The knowledge about traditional Inuit games is used by the GIF only as a historical reminiscence and legitimation, without any practical relevance (GIF 1978).

It is more in the field of dance, music and theatre, that Inuit traditions have found a new field, mostly drum dance qilaatersorneq and mask games uaajeerneq. The famous Tuukkaq theatre, founded in 1975 in Jutland and later transformed into a Fourth World theatre, the Silamiut theatre, started in 1984 in Greenland as the national Greenlandic theatre, and the Aasivik summer festivals of music, dance and culture since 1976 have played an important role for this translation (Jørgensen 1981, Lyngø 1981).

In Inuit North America similar tendencies have showed, however with different cultural effects. On the one hand, Northern Games, World Eskimo Indian Olympics and other forms of competitions have both revived indigenous practices and sportified them to a certain degree. But these games often did not only include "physical disciplines" such as tug-of-war, one-foot high kick, whip cracking, dog team contests, blanket toss and canoe races, but also more complex cultural contests as drum dance, throat singing, igloo building and tea boiling (Ipellie 1979, 1985).

On the other hand, old American Indian and Inuit games have been introduced into schools. Some Alaskan elementary schools use them for physical education purposes. With games such as leg wrestling, one-foot high kick, two-foot high kick, stick pull, seal hop, knee jump and toe kick, teachers try to reach several pedagogical aims: more creativity in physical education, more fun, skill, and strategy components in school sports, efficient development of multicultural awareness and understanding. The paradox is lying in the search for "new games" by "discovering something old", or: "breaking away from traditions" (i.e. from modern sport) by turning towards tradition (i.e. towards traditional games). The paradox includes a fundamentally pedagogic contradiction. The games are treated as isolated, culturally neutral and transferable elements of curriculum, while "space does not permit a description of their respective heritage or customs" (Frey 1989).

A third field of revival in North American Inuit body culture is music and dance, especially drum dance. They are revitalised in the context of growing ethnic awareness (Johnston 1975, 1978). In comparison with the drum dance of the

Siberian Inuit, having got its special dynamic under the circumstances of interdiction and suppression, as well as with the drum dance in autonomous Greenland, one can, however, observe some traits of "museumisation" and folklorization in North American drum dance.

The structural traits of sportification, pedagogization and folklorization are in no way restricted to Inuit societies. They demand some theoretical in-depth study. We shall return to this later.

... Migration Ethnic Cultures and Fan Subcultures

It would be an error to presume that the question of traditional games and of national or cultural identity in sports were restricted to "marginal" or "archaic" people. (The Inuit are, of course, central to their world, where Paris and Frankfurt are marginal, and they are living in the 20th century in a not less archaic way than the West Indians in London.) To further illustrate the modern - if not post-modern - dimension, attention must be paid to the recently arising ethnicity caused by migration. Whether remained from colonial domination or produced by capitalist labour market strategies or other mobility factors, new ethnic situations have been created in many Western European metropolis. The new ethnicity finds its visible expression not at least on the level of body culture.

Positivistic research, however, is mostly concentrated on methods of measurement of "integration" instead of structurally analysing the processes of identity and alienation. Some German sociology of sport has for example discussed the quantitative integration effects of "ethnic sport" among Turkish migrants in West Germany with absurd statistical details and calculations without ever mentioning, which body cultural traditions, sports and games the Turkish migrants are bearing in their own cultural heritage (Frogner 1985). Islamic body culture with prayers, hygienic and taboos, Turkish *yaglı* oil wrestling, dervish trance dance and other practices with all their gender aspects, spiritual dimensions, historical transformations and ethnic cultural distinctions are systematically neglected by the positivistic sociology of sports.

Studies of the subculture dynamics of Asian and African immigrant dance have been more illuminating. Indian Punjab *bhangra* dance in London for example shows that the new social, technological and commercial situation of the migrants produces - or is creatively counteracted by - new forms of cultural expression. *Bhangra* is based on ethnic traditions, but is resulting in a new type of body culture (Hargreaves 1990). Likewise, West Indian crowds have changed the "character" of English cricket, making it a less subdued, more flamboyant milieu.

Another field of national or ethnic distinction in the frame of modern or hyper modern sport shows on the field of fan activities. Football and ice hockey have for some decades been scenes of fan conflicts, escalating, especially in Eastern

Europe in some cases, towards anti-Soviet riots. In March 1969, for example, the fan enjoyment about the victory of the Czechoslovak team over the Soviet team in the ice hockey world championship exploded towards rebellion in several Czech and Slovak towns. Soviet barracks, Aeroflot offices and other symbolic buildings of Soviet occupation were stormed or set on fire (Osteurop. Rundschau 1969).

The English hooligan became, however, the internationally most famous phenomenon of fan violence. His chauvinist appearance has been documented in detail (Williams 1985, Dunning 1988). But the national aspects are visible as well in his contrasting counterpart, the peaceful Danish roligan (Peitersen 1988, Williams 1989).

Both migrant subcultures and fan subcultures show that the connections between ethnic distinction or national identity on the one hand and body culture or sport and games on the other hand are not at all restricted to "remains" from "traditional" societies surviving in "marginal" situations. Attention on the post-modern or hyper modern tendencies concerns the Western metropolis, too, and makes the "ethnic relativity" of international standard sport visible. In this connection, even modern standardised American baseball has become analysed and visible as a "national sport", whether regarded under the aspects of family structure and gender balance, violence control and "civilisation" (Zurcher/Meadow 1967) or as an expression of American modern "rationality", quantification and space organisation (Guttmann 1978, 1988). But maybe, this game or its social configuration will - sooner or later - become historical, - as historical as the WASP (White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant) hegemony in the United States?

Past and Future, Style and Identity

Starting from the Soviet Union in the East, a superpower under the impact of national revolutions also in the field of sport and body culture, one can finish in the West with the other superpower. Its "ethnic revival" will not be restricted to the linguistic aspect either (Fishman 1984). All in all, the panorama shows that the revival and modernisation of traditional games and sports is part of a much more extensive societal process, related to the historically established and actually transformed connection between body culture and ethnic (or national) identity.

Does this signify a body cultural revolution on the large scale? And if so: what has tradition got to do with revolution?

Some assumptions about the evolutionary linearity of history have to be revised. A Polish Marxist scholar, having analysed sports history all his life from the paradigm of evolutionary progressivism, has recently reflected on the phenomenon of the new games in the 1970s as a paradox of the "old" and the "new":

"To some extent it resembles games and play in small medieval towns when the townsfolk were not yet differentiated regarding wealth and prestige. Such games and entertainment of holidays was noisy and merry and the entire urban population took part in them. But this only appears to be a return to the past; it is rather a look at the future world, once again integrated, though on a new and different basis than in the past" (Wohl 1989 p.56).

The dialectics of past and future is, evidently, the one conclusion to be drawn from the transformations in the 1980s. This must be theorised in more depth.

Another conclusion is that the survival as revival of traditional games and sports depends on much more than just their style. Evidently, the difference of "style" as it is often stressed by publications about *gouren* and Celtic wrestling, is interesting as a visible mark of distinction. But it is not the different style as such which makes Celtic wrestling an "ethnic" or "traditional" sport. What is important, is the social and cultural context, making a certain practice of sport or game a body expression of identity.

The focus on context and identity, on social practice rather than style, on the complexity of a body cultural configuration, makes the study of traditional games more difficult. But is it indispensable for evaluating the historical chance of traditional games. And it is the precondition for developing them towards an alternative to sportive standardisation, i.e. towards the practice of survival.

It is at this stage of reflection that historical study -within the perspective of cultural sociology - can help from misunderstanding the demands of practice. Let us look at one example in more detail.

Rising the Cross in Brittany

In 1777, the rector of the parish of Commana (Léon / Brittany) wrote a report on some strange - but usual - forms of contest and competition in his town. Every year, there was held a religious procession, a pardon, where heavy crosses and church banners were carried along a traditional way.

"As soon as the crosses and banners are outside the church and when they have begun their way, the young people flock together around them and everybody wants to carry them. They are quarrelling, they are pulling them from each other, they are even fighting in view of the Holy Sacrament which is carried in the procession. And, in order to get more freedom (*liberté*) for their activities, the young people withdraw as far they can from the clergy, who sometimes loses sight of them. Then they dispute, they laugh high and loud, they try the banners and crosses, they let them down and bear them in this way or let them fall, causing cries of scorn by this. The clergy is forced to leave their places in order to prevent the disorder. These are the processions of Commana and of Saint-Sauveur

looking like, which one -being uninformed- would think to be popular riots (émeutes populaires).

It is the weight of the crosses and banners which makes the glory of the carrier, letting them down in the described way. That is why the perches of the crosses and banners can never be large and heavy enough for the fancy of those who want to carry them. And one has seven some times discovered that they have put stones between the textile of the banners in order to make them heavier."

The report continues by complaining, that even children take part in this, who are sometimes too weak, so that the crosses fall down and are damaged. After returning from the procession other competitions occur inside the church, where the carriers try to carry the crosses and banners as low over the ground as possible.

"The respectable people (honnêtes gens) deplore this disorder; the political authorities have condemned and banned them by their decision from May 26 and August 17 last year. They have ordered and prescribed the church-warden in charge to appeal if necessary even to the authority of Parliament in order to stop this."

There arose, however, a conflict between the clergy and the elders of the parish. The clergy decided to lock the banners away whilst the elders insisted upon their traditional ceremony with banners and crosses as usual. This resulted in a confrontation, where "the carriers of the crosses and banners left the church in spite of the clergy's interdiction and, without doubt, by order of the elders or at least of one of them, who drove them out of the church saying with loud voice to abandon the priests and to follow the signs with which some inhabitants started the tour around the churchyard, while the priests, frightened by this riot, fled into the vestry. One can well imagine the triumph of carriers of the crosses and banners when displaying them and letting them down on their way out of the church" (Peru 1986 p.41).

Configuration : The Body's Rhythm, Space and Energy

The complaint from Commana described in vivid colours the complexity of popular competition which developed towards what is today regarded as the traditional game of rising the perch, le lever de la perche. The configuration of body culture, visible in the case of 1777, can be described in its elements as follows :

(1.) The time of the pardon competition in Commana is the time of festivity, of celebration, i.e. the rhythm of repetition. Compared with modern sport, it is not the streamlined and "futurist" time of record production, no "faster, higher, stronger", no expectation of the future improvement of the record. There is no training for

tomorrow either. The game is decided here and now - and next year again as it has been last year and "ever since".

(2.) The space of the pardon game is the environment of the townspeople - of the living and the dead. There is no need for a separate, specialised facility for competition, not even for barriers to keep the public on distance. But the church, the churchyard, and the road, passing the town and the landscape, form an ensemble of spatial-social identity. The game is taking place there where people are "at home". Moreover, the game is in itself part of a social process establishing "home" - the collective spatial identity of place.

(3.) In the centre of this time-space configuration it is the body and its abilities, its strength and skill, that forms the object of public interest. The competition of the strong bodies, the "strong men", is more important than the theological contents as they are defined by the clerical authorities. The religious celebration is at the same time a spectacle of the body, displaying its capacities.

But the body of rising the cross cannot be understood in its narrow physical meaning. The body is more than what is beneath its skin. The competing body is not at least a body of laughter, of vibration which is collective, as the report tells with indignation - "ils rient aux éclats". The body is not only strong, it is also grotesque. The convulsive body, laughing and laughable, is in the centre of popular carnivalism (Bakhtine 1968).

The pardon game is working with vibration in another dimension, too: by music. The competition would be fundamentally misunderstood if we did not hear the ringing of the bells, fastened to the heavy banners, and the songs of the procession. Competing and singing are combined. Their combination - walking rhythmically, bearing heavily, singing loudly - makes up the collective bodily vibration. It is the "material" base of religious ritual and cult, of living spirituality. This spirituality which is commanding the social process, is not a "belief", but a practice of the collective body - laughing, singing, in common vibration. Maybe the most fitting word for this is the body's energy (Eichberg 1987).

(4.) The body cultural process constitutes a certain interpersonal relation. In the case of Commana this is in high degree a competitive relation - competition between individuals and, as we know it from other cases, probably competition between collectives, between town quarters, streets, villages.

The competition has a gender aspect: It is an exercise of the "strong men". We do not hear about women involved in the game and conflict. Maybe this reflects the patriarchal pattern of Catholic Christianity, standing in some contrast to what has been described as the "Breton matriarchy" (Audibert 1984, Carrer 1984). From the historical sources of gouren we know that Breton women also took part in wrestling. On the other hand, there have also existed "men's games" under matrilineal and non-patriarchal conditions. Last but not least, we should not forget, that women are present both in the procession and in the dance, following or related to the celebration. The procession is just one part of a larger body cultural

arrangement. And it is in itself not only a competition between the carriers of the banners, it is also a sort of dance, a common rhythm, a music of body movement. Maybe, the complaining authority could even have complained about certain erotic aspects in the rising of the banners, but his Catholic decency prevented him from doing so.

The interpersonal relation is, moreover, characterised by the fact that not only "strong men" participated. But, the report laments, that there were also children trying to lift the heavy burden. The participants are not - as in modern sports - assorted according to classes of weight or strength. Their game relation is a togetherness.

(5.) In the competitions of rising the banner, do we find any objectivation of results? Compared with measurement in modern sport, the activities of the pardon are not objectified. There is no record nor quantification of results. The banners are made heavy by stones, but their weight is neither measured nor systematically compared or raised towards a record. On the other hand there is some other sort of "objectivity" in the game, a decision about the out-come here and now: who can rise the cross or who will carry the banner all the way. But this decision is related to human beings, not to abstract results. It relates to concrete, present strong men and - eventually -to their memory. No quantitative ciphers will come out of it, but the event can run into a story, an oral tradition about a successful (or unsuccessful) somebody: «la gloire de les porter".

Towards the Secret History of the Revolution?

(6.) The bodily process - time, space, body, energy, relation, objectivation - is related to a superstructure of values and measures, describing and prescribing the ideal pattern of the game: what is right and what is wrong. This can extend from the simple scale of decision or measurement - who is the stronger one here and now? - up to the complex mythology of the game and its relation to the meaning of life. It is here where Christian and pagan values were conflicting in the case of Commana 1777.

(7.) Another superstructure arching above the body cultural process is the world of institutions, prescribing and controlling the "correct" execution of the game. Where modern sport has produced written rules, referees, controlling bureaucracies etc., the rising of the banner in Commana is based on local self-determination and ad-hoc control of the present public, and maybe also on the age groupings of the youngsters and their informal organisation. In this world of institutions the political conflict arises, confronting the participants and their elders on the one hand to the clergy, the reporting rector and the political authorities on the other hand. From this dimension of the configuration, the "popular riot" is erupting.

On the level of institutions the complaining report confronts the "émeutes populaires" and "liberté" on the one hand and the "honnêtes gens" on the other. A prelude to the revolution?

Indeed, it is seducing to relate the "riot" of Commana to the political and social revolt which erupted eleven years later in Brittany and some months later even on the national state level of France. There can rarely be doubt about that the story of 1777 leads to some of the conditions and sources of 1789. Do body cultural events form the secret history of revolution?

When looking on the out-come of 1789, however, and taking into consideration the complexity of the body cultural configurations, the revolution of those years was far from reinstalling the traditional game against the clergy and the authorities of aristocratic society. Rather on the contrary: the body cultural revolution from the late 18th century onwards did away with the traditional games and replaced them by new configurations, by sport, gymnastics and folklore.

The revolution of body culture changed the configuration of games and exercises fundamentally. The rising of the banner for example would - just like the other traditional games - be marginalized or disappear. Or it could be "preserved" as folklore. Or it could be sportified. A combination of folklorization and sportification can be seen in the "rising of the perch" in Brittany today (Peru 1986). How can the modernisation of the old games be described within the categories of configuration?

The Modernisation of Games

(1.) The modern games uncoupled the activities from the rhythm of celebration. The time pattern of festive repetition was replaced by a new type of time order: leisure time as the opposite of working time. The productivity began to determine the patterns of time, the outside conditions - sport as being assigned to leisure as non-productive time - as well as the inside structures. Thus, for the sport of competition there was introduced a new type of streamlining and continuity, directed into the future: training in order to raise the record, growth in achievement, increase and maximisation. Citius, altius, fortius. For this purpose, the perch had to be measured and supplied by a graduated weight. The activity is not for here and now, but for the improvement of results into an open future.

(2.) The space of the game became now more and more specialised and standardised i.e. isolated against the environment of everyday life. The church and churchyard, which the authorities since early modern times had tried to "clean" from pagan games and pleasures - and the case of 1777 was just one of many attempts - was now effectively restricted to the "sacred" ceremony as defined by theology.

The road was taken over by the rolling traffic and later on by automobilism. It disappeared as the place of games.

The Breton gouren is an example for a further dimension of how the management of space was changing. In premodern times there had been a "fool" or "police" holding the public at distance by grotesque measures, by a whip or a frying-pan, black and blackening by soot. Now, this was replaced by barriers. The stadium, the sports hall and highly specialised facilities were the final result of this process of technological separation.

(3.) Concerning the body itself, interest in strength diminished and was replaced by the fascination of speed and velocity. By this, most of the old games of strength and endurance were marginalized, or they had to be transformed into quick and dynamic exercises - like football and boxing. It was the streamlined body that was asked for now.

Neither was there, in the new body cultural configuration, any longer place for laughter and popular carnivalism. The fool disappeared, not only in gouren. The music which had accompanied running contests, wrestling and other games, came to silence, too. The body's energy transformed into what now was regarded as modern dynamic.

(4.) The initial point for the new dynamics of sport was the production of results. It constituted the new form of objectivation in movement culture. Movement and activity were subordinated under achievement: quantified, measured, registered. Even the perch had to be standardised for this purpose: made from steel and furnished by an installation to regulate the weight. This was not only a question of precision. The production of sport results is a mirror of a new societal pattern, of industrial productivity orientation. A new hegemony of production - at this point, the driving force of transformation in games as well as in society can be identified.

(5.) Under the stress of the new productivity, the interpersonal relations changed, too. The togetherness cross to gender, age, skill, strength etc., was dissolved by new classifications. Gender classes, age classes, weight classes began to assort the participants. This constituted a new form of "equality" but at the same time broke up and scattered the social connection in games. A new type of patriarchal-masculine dominance was established in sport. The dance - rhythmic vibration of togetherness - disappeared and became placed outside the sport in strict sense. That Brittany has kept the "fest noz" - the night dance festivity - has been a lucky "anachronism".

(6.) Above the new sport of productivity, new values and mythologies arose. Best known became the Olympic idea of Pierre de Coubertin. But the complex pedagogic and the para-religious ideas of the founder have gradually become reduced to rather one-dimensional principles such as "Faster, higher, stronger".

(7.) The institutional equivalent of the ideas of record, increasing achievement and competition is the hierarchical system of tournaments and championships. They are organised and controlled by national and international sport federations and their bureaucracies. But recently, commercial organisation, science and television

media have got more and more influence on the institutional framework of the games.

Sportification, Pedagogization, Folklorization

Sportification has, however, been but one form of the modernisation of games. Others have been the functionalism pedagogization and the folklorization. Besides the model of achievement sport there has during modern society always existed another model of sport and physical activity, sometimes called gymnastics, sometimes sport for all, fitness sport or welfare sport. In this model, movement and game is instrumental and functionalized: for health and hygienic, for pedagogical adjustment, for social integration. The pedagogisation of Inuit games in Alaska has been mentioned as one example. Here the games are loosened from their cultural context, too, but in another way: They are treated as a pedagogical instrument. As the Indonesian fighting art pencak silat shows, this can also be developed towards a sort of militarization.

A third way of modernisation has been the model of folklore. It means a third form of isolating the game or dance from its social background, but here in the interest of "preservation" and representation. The movement or activity is used as a sort of theatre: it presents national or regional identity, often in a bizarre manner, appealing to the fancy of tourists or state guests. Its spatial-institutional equivalent is the museum. This model, too, has been mentioned above as a risk in the development of North American Inuit games.

The question is, however, whether these forms of modernisation are today the only alternatives. We remember the remark of Andrzej Wohl about the new games: They are reminders of medieval social structures, not as nostalgia, but as a vision for the future. Does the new attention for traditional games in the 1980s denote a new societal situation, in which "old games" are not just a restoration of something anachronistic, but a new experiment fitting to new conditions of life? Does the breakdown of the East European sport system signify a crisis of sportive modernisation, as well as of modern sportification?

A Post sportive Sound?

(1.) The time of modern sport, the wage worker's splitting-up between leisure time and working time, is no longer relevant for the majority of the population. New social classes arose with new time patterns (not only the unemployed). At the same time, the futurist dynamic of the sportive time seems to lose its fascination. What has been fascinating before - to raise the standard - is now turning to illness: stress (Nitsch 1981, Dossey 1982). Doping is a material expression of this stress situation.

(2.) In the field of sports architecture and spatial planning we witness a growing criticism of "container architecture" (Eichberg 1988). Modern swimming facilities - water slides, irregular shapes etc. - emphasise fun and bodily experiences rather than the standardisation for training or competition. Commercial as well as alternative building practice is trying new ways. Joggers, skate-boarders, roller-skaters and carnivalistic festivals are reconquering the road as a space of body culture and game. A new social politics tries to use sports as a - central - factor in community reconstruction, in social network politics and local identity.

(3.) With the carnivalistic traits in recent sport, the culture of laughter is reappearing. We witness also a new musicalization of sports.

(4.) School pedagogic have been the first to reduce the production of quantitative results in sport education. Television is on the one hand favouring the top achievement sport, but on the other hand it is contributing to the reverse: changing the focus towards the spectacular, towards sport as theatre, as circus. It is not any longer the result which is counting, but the show.

(5.) Social sport, family sport and "sport across the limits" (of age etc.) are establishing news patterns of inter-personal relations. The "Gallo popular games" at Monterfil since 1977 are an example of how to reconstruct social relations by traditional games - in a new context. It is not by accident, that the communicative aspects of traditional games have been rediscovered in this situation (Møller 1984).

The "post-modern" and post-sportive tendencies are not at all unequivocal; opposite tendencies are developing, too. But the configuration of sportive modernity is in question. Studies in economic transformations since the 1960s show, moreover, that sport is not an isolated field. The interest of economic and technological development is pushing in the direction of small scale production and regionalization, which - under the dominance of industrial modernity - once had been regarded as "archaic" (Toffler 1980, Piore/Sabel 1984).

If this is right, then the tendencies in Western Europe towards autonomy on smaller regional levels are not accidental and not without a larger societal perspective - in the political field as well as in the fields of games and body culture. 42 million Europeans are actually living without states or outside states of their own language. This is a large number, but these millions are only a part of the challenge - and not only on the level of linguistic self-determination. The same may be true for the revolution in Eastern Europe: The collapse of the centralist state systems and the modern sport systems is not only a question restricted to the Eastern hemisphere.

In this process, the nationalisation of sports and games, which could be registered from the late 18th century onward, is lifted to a new level. It becomes dramatically

reactualized and - that is its actual paradox - at the same time transformed and dissolved. National identification with sport results, national gymnastic-military discipline and national standardised folklore experience a crisis, which is parallel to the crisis of the existing "national state". Popular cultures are finding their expressions in other body cultural forms. Cultural identity forms itself on the base of a new the multiplicity of configurations.

The drum dance is not modern sport. If its sound nevertheless as significant for the late 20th century, - could it be a "post-modern" sound?

Changes of Configuration

	TRADITIONAL	MODERN SPORT	"Post-modern" GAMES SPORT
1. Time	Festivity Rhythmic Repetition	Leisure/Working time futurist maximisation Streamline, growth	Sport of the unemployed experience of stress
2. Space	Integration local identity place	specialisation standardisation isolation	Jogging space "community sport" crisis of "container architecture"
3. Energy	Laughter music ritual "spirituality"	disciplinary, seriousness disappearance of music dynamic of speed	new carnivalism remusicalization new religious body therapies
4. Interpersonal relations	patriarchy/Matriarchy togetherness of ages locality/Internationality	male dominance classes of gender age and weight state identification with results	"sport across the limits" family sport, social sport multiplicity of cultural identities
5. Objectivation	the "strong man" "Glory" victory here and now achievement	production of results quantification of records medias	crisis of educational quantification sport show
6. Values and ideas	Pagan traditions Christian traditionality	Faster, higher, stronger, C-G-S- rationality Olympic ideology "Health"	criticism of sport New age ideology sport
7. Institutions	local self-determination age groups	hierarchical system bureaucratic control	non organised and commercial sport alternative body culture

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A RESOLUTION CONCERNING EUROPE'S TRADITION OF POPULAR SPORTS, GAMES AND RECREATION PAST-TIMES

(Sent to all the European MP's in September 1991, in 8 different languages)

Introduction:

- The 1980s have seen a growing appreciation of Europe's cultural diversity, including her traditional games and past-times.

This awareness of the importance of local and regional activities is greatly encouraged as towns and regions twin across national boundaries.

- Interest in this area of activity has been further boosted by the revolution in Eastern Europe, which drew much initial inspiration at the level of ' body-culture ' and sport. With the lessening in importance of state-sponsored sports, traditional popular games re-emerged as part of a general liberation of popular culture.

- Migration into and between the countries of Europe can result in conflicts when new-comers seek to preserve their cultural identity in their new homes in the face of attempts to persuade them to conform and integrate with their adopted society.

- International sport, standardised and media-promoted, has created major problems which are being discussed at the international level; drugs, hooliganism and excessive nationalism.

It is worth asking whether traditional popular sports could hold the answer, not just by reducing the problem but by introducing a new concept of social relations, founded on their local roots?

- In all these interlocking ways these sporting, competitive and physical activities reflect social and cultural trends of a more general nature.

The **European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages**, founded in 1984, could, perhaps, be seen as a first step towards caring for an even larger cultural reality.

Effects and causes: the nature of the problem

I) Why are these traditional popular games, despite their social and cultural importance, nowadays under threat ?

- Many have disappeared as the result of direct repression. They were condemned, especially, though not solely, in Eastern Europe, as old fashioned,

obsolete, reactionary, separatist and incompatible with the state's desire to be in all things up to date.

- Indirect repression has been no less effective through :

- . Economic and social marginalisation
- . Suppression in schools and in the media
- . Appropriation of their special playing places for other purposes such as roads, building land and so on.
- . Giving them a deliberately low priority politically and financially.

- Some have been absorbed into the world of competitive sport, with its alien need to record results as statistics, in centimetres, grains, seconds or points. Reduced in this way to a 'monoculture', they lose their social and community value and even, in some cases, become mere commercialised spectator sports.

- Others have been forced to accept the limited role of helping to promote some other objective, as physical education in school or as part of the training for some other sport. The demotion of these games to such a subservient role **reduces the cultural diversity of the world of sport.**

- A too-strictly conservationist approach is equally damaging. It can lead to their being 'folklorised' or 'mummified' as for a museum taking them out of their everyday social context and reducing them **to mere tourist attractions.** This 'fossilisation' prevents the natural interplay of **tradition and evolution** that characterises a living sport.

2) In the face of such hostility and disparagement the future of these games and traditional sports takes on an undeniable social and cultural significance.

Let us explain :

- This games heritage lies at the very foundation of our respective cultural traditions. They come from the roots of our cultures.

- These indigenous past-times reflect the many-sidedness of European culture and give it a means of expression.

- The popularity of some games crosses state frontiers, demonstrating an international side to life, which pre-dates the idea of the nation itself.

- This exciting diversity raises **interesting possibilities for cultural tourism.** It offers the challenge of 'cultourism'.

- The equipment necessary for these games is usually cheap, so that anyone can afford to play them.

- These games provide a very varied training for social and community skills. They make opportunities for social contact and for the exchange of experiences across the generations. They enrich the life of the individual and the community alike and have to do with family as well as community and territorial identity, an organiser of non-working time. Seen as a counter to ' the problem of society' popular games provide a chance to reconsider the question of identification and alienation.

- Though their diversity games create good opportunities for learning. As a ' school for life they can provide a model for schools of the future and **for revising our educational practices.**

- Popular games are equally important in economic terms. They not only contribute directly to the economy of their region but also, by harnessing a sense of regional identity and social solidarity, become a source of productive and intellectual energy.

- Through their diversity, their non-conformism, these ' people's games ' serve as a laboratory for 'post-modernism'; ' **a testing ground of social ideas for the future.**

- One must not forget that play, itself is fundamental to human culture. Homo Ludens came before Homo sapiens. Games culture is, therefore, a human condition that we must preserve and develop carefully for our own sakes and for future generations.

- These popular traditional games illustrate vividly that:

. a ' local' attachment is a universal feeling.

. the ' global' only exists in terms of a popular and regional social reality.

3) So adaptable to circumstances are these games that their variety defies any attempt at a rigid, comprehensive definition. There is no rigid dividing line between these popular games and, for example :

. Traditional festivities

. Regional sports

. Dance culture

. Forms of musical expression etc.

- This is why we have preferred to talk here of ' games culture ' to make clear the close inter-relationship between games and the community whose bonds are re-formed each time in a process of cultural renewal that resists any normal definition or generalised abstract classification.

- One further point; the care and promotion of these games can only happen within a general European framework of laws similar to those, which for example, protect wild animals (against cruel exploitation)

4) The support and development of these games calls for new experimental research into the philosophy of games and body culture, cultural sociology and social history, a popular research, a combination of the practical and theoretical approach.