



# The Palgrave Handbook of Globalization and Sport

*Edited by*

Joseph Maguire · Katie Liston · Mark Falcous

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*To all academics (affiliated and independent) who are coping with the challenges of globalization accentuated by COVID-19 and those who continue to stand for equity and justice in relation to global sport, given the current political juncture.*

# Acknowledgments

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# Abbreviations

BLM	Black Lives Matter
CABS	Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport
CG	Commonwealth Games
CGF	Commonwealth Games Federation
CONIFA	Confederation of Independent Football Associations
Covid-19	Coronavirus Pandemic
CYG	Commonwealth Youth Games
DR	Dominican Republic
FIFA	<i>Fédération Internationale de Football Association</i>
GANEFO	Games of the New Emerging Forces
IOC	International Olympic Committee
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MLB	Major League Baseball
NFL	National Football League
PAR	Participatory Action Research
QPE	Quality Physical Education
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDP	Sport, Development and Peace
SfD	Sport-for-Development
SfDP	Sport-for-Development and Peace
SME	Sports Mega-Events
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAR	Video Assisted Referees
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

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# Part I

## Introduction





# 1

## Introduction: Mapping the Global Sports Sphere

Joseph Maguire, Katie Liston, and Mark Falcous

Writing this introduction to the *Handbook of Sport and Globalization* in the shadow cast by the COVID-19 pandemic is a profound reminder of both the global interconnectedness of daily lives, and the fragilities and vulnerabilities of that interdependent world. Paradoxically, the disruption to what had become the often-unquestioned ways that people (athletes, coaches, fans, doctors, scientists), images, ideas, and money traverse the world as part of the global sports system has reinforced awareness of the extent to which sport is embedded within worldwide interdependencies. Furthermore, the controversies and politicking surrounding the impacts, cancellations, and reconfigurations of various competitions and events are a stark reminder of the socially contested nature of the global sport sphere.

The concept of globalization refers to the growing network of interdependencies—political, economic, cultural, and social—which bind human

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beings together, for better and for worse (Appadurai, 1990; Maguire, 2012; McGrew, 1992). Globalization processes are not of recent origin, nor do they occur evenly across all areas of the globe. These processes involve an increasing intensification of global interconnectedness, are long term in nature, and accelerated during the twentieth and into the twenty-first century (Maguire, 1999, 2005). It is increasingly difficult to understand local or national experiences without reference to these global flows. In fact, our living conditions, beliefs, knowledge, and actions are intertwined with unfolding globalization processes. These processes include the emergence of a global economy, a transnational cosmopolitan culture, and a range of international social movements. A multitude of transnational or global economic and technological exchanges, communication networks, and migratory patterns characterizes this interconnected world pattern. As part of early definitional efforts, Giddens conceived globalization as “[the] intensification of social relations at the world level, linking distant locations such that local events are structured by events occurring across the world” (1990, 341).

As a result of this interdependency, people experience spatial and temporal dimensions differently. There is a ‘speeding up’ of time and a ‘shrinking’ of space. Bauman (1998) noted that this time–space compression is implicated in the “ongoing multifaceted transformation of the parameters of the human condition” (p. 2). Hence, people become more attuned to the notion that their lives and place of living are part of a single social space: the globe. Globalization, however, is not necessarily linked to harmony or global integration. Familiar structures and orientations under the ‘logic of globalization’, Robins (1997, 12) argued, “are weakening, and we are increasingly exposed to new and disorientating horizons of possibility” as “we come upon new experiences and encounters, with the promise of new possibilities, but also the prospect of new uncertainties and anxieties”.

Robins (1997) notes two important qualifications in this regard. First, globalization does not supersede and displace everything that preceded it. Alternatively, he argues that “globalization may be seen in terms of an accumulation of cultural phenomena, where new global elements coexist alongside existing and established local or national cultural forms” (1997, 19). The consequence is a juxtaposition of old and new elements and a combination of continuity alongside change as characteristic of the global condition. Second, the consequences of globalization are complex and diverse. Processes of global change, Robins explains, “are multifarious and experienced differentially by all those who confront them” (1997, 20). Globalization then, may be uneven, unequal, and differential in its consequences in a variety of

locales. These cautionary points assist the social scientist in attempting to comprehend ‘what in the world is going on’?

Globalization processes, then, involve multi-directional movements of people, practices, customs, and ideas underpinned by a series of power balances always in flux. In different areas of social life, there is a constant vying for dominant positions among established (core) and outsider (peripheral) groups and nation-states (Maguire, 1999, 2005). Given this growth in the multiplicity of linkages and networks that transcend nation-states, it is not surprising that we may be at the earliest stages of the development of a ‘global culture’, of which sport is a part. This process entails a shift from ethnic or national cultures to supranational forms based upon either the culture of a superpower or of cosmopolitan communication and migrant networks. In this connection, there is considerable debate as to whether the global sport is leading to a form of homogenized body culture—specifically, along Western lines. There is some evidence to support this. Yet global flows are simultaneously increasing the varieties of body cultures and identities available to people in local cultures, in other words, ‘glocalization’. Global sport, then, may also be leading to a reduction in contrasts between societies, but also to the emergence of new varieties of body cultures and identities. In addition, the intensification of national identity, in the form of populism, has also reinvigorated the long-standing connection between sport and nationalism.

Though there is debate concerning the genesis of globalization processes, for some it is clear that they gathered momentum between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries (Roudometof & Robertson, 1995). These processes have continued apace since the turn of the nineteenth century. Several recent features of these processes stand out: these include an increase in the number of international agencies, the growth of global forms of communication, the development of global competitions and prizes, and the development of notions of rights and citizenship that are increasingly standardized internationally. The emergence and diffusion of sport in the nineteenth century are clearly interwoven with this overall process. The development of national and international sports organizations, the growth of competition between national teams, the worldwide acceptance of rules governing specific Western sport forms, and the establishment of global competitions such as the Olympic Games and the men’s and women’s soccer World Cups, are all indicative of the occurrence of the globalization of sport.

## Conceptualizing Global Sport

While widely recognized to extend several centuries, recent and accelerating worldwide interdependence gave rise to attempts to conceptualize 'globalization' within the social sciences. This work accelerated during the 1970s and 1980s. Although frequently ignored by mainstream social scientists, sport has often been identified as both constituent of and a facilitator of greater global interdependence; both adding scope to global processes, and also being shaped by the influences of globalization patterns. Key features of the global sporting infrastructure include: the emergence of unified international sports federations facilitating the spread of sport; the worldwide acceptance of governing bodies; the establishment of global sporting events, such as the Olympic Games, Football (soccer) World Cup and the proliferation of annual World Championship titles; the rapid development and growth of an international sports goods industry, the circulation of athletes, fans and personnel, and the embrace of sport by global media, television, and internet in particular (Maguire, 2016). Modern sport, then, *is* global.

Simultaneously, sport is *also* a potent symbol of local/national cultures and identities and provides point of abrasion with global interconnectedness. Indeed, despite a worldwide 'reach' and organizational infrastructure, the spread of sport is not synonymous with processes of homogenization at the cultural level. Alternatively, myriad historical antecedents, local distinctions, and cultural ties constitute important factors in global sport. The capacity of sport to reinforce and symbolize local cultural distinctiveness led Rowe (2003) to argue that while sport is often viewed as an exemplar of globalization, it also needs to be understood *simultaneously* as a site of resistance to, or even an amelioration of, globalizing forces. Hence, careful consideration of historically formed local characteristics and contexts is essential for a comprehension of global sport. The prominent role of games and leisure forms in the expression of cultural distinctiveness and identity has meant that sport is highly visible in the transformation of local cultures in the context of globalization (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2009). Highlighting the potential for the examination of sports to shed light on this debate, Tomlinson (1996, 589–590) suggests "[sports] embody dramatically the tensions of the local–global dualism, offering as they do forms of sub-global identity and affiliation within the globalized discourses of international sporting contacts and exchanges". Consequently, the analysis of global sport provides fertile ground to consider local–global interplay.

As historians have long documented, the globalization of sport is not new. Through waves of uneven diffusion, resistance, modification, and commingling, sport emerges as something inherently global in structure and organization, yet never independent from power axes. More specifically, global diffusion followed political-economic-military power vectors. In his five-stage process of 'sportization', Maguire (1994, 1999) identified a global 'take off' between 1870 and 1920. He notes that this epoch was characterized by "the differential diffusion of 'English' sport forms to continental Europe and to both the formal and informal British Empire" (1994, 405). This was followed by "the spread of sports to all parts of Europe, Africa, Asia and South America" (1999, 83). Subsequently, between the 1920s and 1960s, he identified that "sport can be said to have become a global idiom" (Maguire, 1994, 408) with an emerging 'global' sport characterized by a specific ideology of Western masculine culture and nationalism. Finally, commencing in the 1960s to the present, non-Western nations begin to rise to sport prominence and even pre-eminence, as former colonial nations began to beat their former masters, especially the English. African, Asian, and South American nations came (and are) increasingly to the fore.

The cultural meanings of sport are never uncontested, and globalization entails significant complexity and features countervailing trends that defy simplistic models or schema of understanding. Taking the singular case of cricket, for instance, its diffusion reveals contestation of the practice of cricket and contradictory, countervailing and shifting patterns across these sportization phases (Maguire, 1999, 2005). In the case of its diffusion to India alone, for example, cricket traversed along British imperial lines of influence and colonial hierarchies. It was subsequently adopted by local Indian elites in line with broader imperial dynamics. Such patterns were symptomatic of patterns of English sports surpassing traditional Indian games in cultural presence and popularity, again, symptomatic of the cultural collisions and power imbalances of imperialism. Subsequently, indigenous pastimes, like Kabaddi, became organized like English sports in the 1920s with rules, formal competitions, and federations. In turn, however, cricket subsequently developed as a cultural expression of counter-colonial Indian nationalism and, eventually, in the Third Millennium, emerged as the largest and most lucrative television audience in the world via the commercial rise of the Indian Premier League (IPL). This reverses previous east-to-west player migration trends, attracting the world's top players to compete in India on lucrative contracts, and to some extent, the outcome is a 'post-Westernization' effect whereby the Western aligned strongholds of cricket have been subsumed to the Indian subcontinent's economic power (see Rowe & Gilmour, 2008). Thus, in this

one case, cricket as a sport form is entangled with transmitting imperial values, reshaping local practices/body cultures, it emerges as a means of fostering anti-colonial nationhood, and subsequently as a hypercommodified global spectacle sold back to the wider world.

Yet global sport processes were not solely the direct outcome of nation-state or counter-colonial or even post-Imperial activities (e.g., the International Olympic Committee (IOC) operates independently of any specific nation-state). Rather, these processes need to be accounted for in relation to how they may operate relatively independently of conventionally designated societal and sociocultural processes. In addition, while the globalization of sport is connected to the intended ideological practices of specific groups of people from particular countries, its pattern and development cannot be reduced solely to these ideological practices. Although elite sports migrants, officials, and consumers are caught up in globalization processes, they do have the capacity to reinterpret cultural products and experiences into something distinct, as the local acts back on the global (Andrews, 2006; Giulianotti & Robertson, 2009; Maguire, 2005). Furthermore, the receptivity of national popular cultures to non-indigenous cultural products can be active and heterogeneous; that is, local lives make sense of global events. As the work in this Handbook reveals, all of this is not to overlook a political economy at work in the production and consumption of global sport products. Globalization then is best understood as a balance and blend between diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties, a commingling of cultures and attempts by more established groups to control and regulate access to global flows (see Maguire, 1999). The global development of sport has undoubtedly led to a degree of homogenization—in common with broader globalization processes. In addition, the spread of British/European/Western sports has had elements of cultural imperialism infused with it. Further, while there was no master plan in the early phases of this process, transnational corporations have sought to strategically market their products to consumers across the globe and nation-states use sport to project soft power through various modes of cultural diplomacy. Westerners were the initial global winners at their own games both on and off the field. However, the ‘great game’ (Liston & Maguire, 2020) is now more complex with a variety of Asian and Gulf State important players in the corridors of global sport. The male members of Western societies were acting as a form of the established group on a world level. Their tastes and conduct, including their sports, were part of this, and these practices had similar effects to those of elite cultural activities within Western societies themselves. They acted and act as signs of distinction, prestige, and power. Yet, this is not the whole story.