

Short presentation of the book **“Indigenous Sports and Games, which sports leisure’s for the society of tomorrow?”**

This book is the result of a symposium organized in 2002 in Nantes, Brittany, France. Since the creation in 2001 of the AEJeST (European Traditional Sports and Games Association) it was one of the first big scientific events organized with the participation of a large academic movement of researchers and teachers. A first book in French was published in 2005 and this last English version has been published in order to better disseminate the work and ideas contained therein.

Sean Egan, a Canadian sociologist born in Ireland, invites participants on an exotic and instructive journey to the land of the Inuit and Cree, indigenous peoples of North America. Thanks to an ethnographic approach, he highlights the importance of maintaining the games for these ethnic groups threatened in terms of values, social rules, body practices, social relations through the cultural and commercial contagion of neighboring powers. If it is necessary to take advantage of the beneficial influence of acculturation based on borrowings and interbreeding, the contact must not be made to the exclusive detriment of one of the lifestyles (deculturation). Sean Egan's observations do not encourage optimism and these cultures seem doomed to decline, if not to simply disappear.

Grant Jarvie, Scottish sociologist and historian, takes the example of the Scottish Highland Games gatherings to warn us against the ethnocentric drifts which would consist in hierarchizing cultures. The author believes in particular that indigenous sports can produce healthier relationships between cultures through a balanced internationalization of exchanges (concept of internationalization against that of globalization). More specifically, Grant Jarvie shows that indigenous sports are not automatically assimilated to modern and institutional sports because national and regional spaces retain their role in the production of cultural identities. This means, according to him, that indigenous games continue to leave their imprint on modern sports. Alongside language, art, music, dance, folklore...

Gianfranco Staccioli, Italian sociologist and pedagogist, adopts a resolutely didactic approach to legitimize, in the field of indigenous games, the pedagogical intervention as a formative experience, that is to say which brings a positive change in those for whom it is intended. According to the author, and here he uses the expression of non-consciousness of sociologists, the player deludes himself, as in the sport situation, if he radically separates the sphere of play from the other spheres of social life. Gianfranco Staccioli considers that the qualities offered by indigenous games are undeniable because they allow a multiplicity of roles, an enhancement of the right to be different, a consideration of local history. The game makes possible a moral education because it reveals a specific conception of life. This is why, according to the author, indigenous sports and games must be rediscovered by young people, in particular by reintroducing them in the school circuit, in an appropriate manner. The author concludes that

indigenous sports and games, unlike most recreational and sporting practices, are not limited to motor actions but constitute 'Total Experiences'. He even goes so far as to affirm, contrary to the usual representation, that indigenous sports and games are the true educational models and not the institutionalized sports which privilege the notion of accomplishment.

Pere Lavega, a Spanish sociologist, highlights the educational virtues of Indigenous games, in their external dimensions (educational, cultural, relational, symbolic) and in their internal dimensions (motor and regulatory). By measuring them and comparing them to modern sports which favor competitive confrontation, the measurement of performance, the scheduling of the show, the author believes that learning about traditional games must relate to all these dimensions. Pere Lavega shows in particular that traditional games judiciously mobilize the multiple resources of the environment: adaptation to the topography, recovery of materials, transformation of the everyday objects. The educational virtues of Indigenous games seem to him indisputable, in terms of mastering time, knowing Others, appropriating space, adhering to the values of the group. The author mentions concrete achievements carried out in Catalonia around Indigenous sports and games which prove, if necessary, the merits of an adapted pedagogy.

Henning Eichberg, Danish historian and philosopher from German origin, brings us back to Inuit culture and its games based on combat, balance, running, skill and strength. From a more precise questioning of the many games, the author leads a philosophical reflection on the place of challenge, commitment, laughter, violence in civilization and on the possible need for an educational transmission of playful (Ludic) experiences. The analysis also includes the recurring question of the differences between games and sports. Henning Eichberg is inspired by the theories of Norbert Elias on the process of civilization to oppose brutal force and technique, carnivalesque laughter and sport seriousness. The author contests the functionalist theses which analyze these practices of competition by their social functions of integration, development, regulation, identification. He prefers philosophical approaches that highlight the subjectivity of the participants, the goal of the game being less to win a victory than to test one's own limits and experience one's inner strength.

Pierre Parlebas, French sociologist and pedagogist, takes an anthropological look at the parentage and transmission of games. It starts from the principle that peoples are distinguished as much by their games as by their kinship structures, their language productions or their forms of habitat. It is the concept of 'ethnomotricity' that allows him to account for this playful diversity and the link between body games, which he also calls sporting games, and the society in which they are practiced. Pierre Parlebas observes that the general question of playful heritage poses a problem since identical games are observable in distant societies. Pierre Parlebas comes to strongly condemn the evolutionist idea that sports represent progress, and therefore a higher stage, compared to indigenous sports and games. These actually mobilize elaborate 'motor cultures' and must therefore retain their own identity.

Guy Jaouen, researcher in cultural anthropology, returns to the general theme of the Nantes meetings by making a point on the general situation. To conclude, he introduces a debate that goes far beyond a debate on the sport and the game, because this debate is actually a societal debate on the relationships we want to build for tomorrow's society and therefore what we want to pass on to future generations. The texts provide to readers element of answers to enable them to form their own opinion.

Ce livre est le résultat d'un colloque organisé en 2002 à Nantes, Bretagne, France. Suite à la création en 2001 de l'AEJeST (Association Européenne des Sports et Jeux Traditionnels), ce fut l'une des premières grandes manifestations scientifiques organisées avec la participation d'un large mouvement académique de chercheurs et d'enseignants. Un premier livre en français fut publié en 2005 et cette dernière version en anglais a été publiée afin de mieux diffuser les travaux et les idées contenues.

Sean Egan, sociologue canadien né en Irlande, invite les participants à un voyage exotique et instructif au pays des *Inuits* et des *Crees*, peuples de l'Amérique du Nord. Grâce à une approche ethnographique il met en avant l'importance du maintien des jeux pour ces ethnies menacées sur le plan des valeurs, des règles sociales, des pratiques corporelles, des rapports sociaux par la contagion culturelle et marchande des puissances voisines. S'il faut profiter de l'influence bienfaitrice de l'acculturation à base d'emprunts et de métissages, le contact ne doit pas se réaliser au détriment exclusif d'un des styles de vie (déculturation). Les observations de Sean Egan n'encouragent pas à l'optimisme et ces cultures semblent vouées à la déchéance, pour ne pas dire à la disparition pure et simple.

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Grant Jarvie, sociologue et historien écossais, prend l'exemple des rassemblements écossais *Highland Games* pour nous mettre en garde contre les dérives ethnocentristes qui consisteraient à hiérarchiser les cultures. L'auteur estime notamment que les sports traditionnels peuvent produire des rapports plus sains entre cultures à travers une internationalisation équilibrée des échanges (concept d'internationalisation contre celui de globalisation). Plus précisément, Grant Jarvie montre que les sports traditionnels ne sont pas automatiquement assimilés aux sports modernes et institutionnels car les espaces nationaux et régionaux conservent leur rôle dans la production des identités culturelles. Cela revient à dire, selon lui, que les jeux traditionnels continuent à marquer de leur empreinte les sports modernes. À côté de la langue, l'art, la musique, la danse, le folklore...

Gianfranco Staccioli, sociologue et pédagogue italien, adopte une démarche résolument didactique pour légitimer, dans le domaine des jeux populaires, l'intervention pédagogique comme expérience formatrice, c'est-à-dire qui apporte un changement positif chez ceux à qui elle est destinée. Selon l'auteur, et il reprend ici l'expression de non-conscience des sociologues, le joueur se berce d'illusion, comme dans la situation sportive, s'il sépare radicalement la sphère du jeu des autres sphères de la vie sociale. Gianfranco Staccioli considère que les qualités offertes par les jeux populaires sont indéniables car ils autorisent une multiplicité des rôles, une valorisation du droit à la différence, une prise en compte de l'histoire locale. Le jeu rend possible une éducation morale car il dévoile une conception de la vie. C'est pour cela, selon l'auteur, que les jeux de tradition doivent être redécouverts par les jeunes, en les

example of the Scottish Highland Games gatherings to warn us against the ethnocentric drifts which would consist in hierarchizing cultures. The author believes in particular that indigenous sports can produce healthier relationships between cultures through a balanced internationalization of exchanges (concept of internationalization against that of globalization). More specifically, Grant Jarvie shows that indigenous sports are not automatically assimilated to modern and institutional sports because national and regional spaces retain their role in the production of cultural identities. This means, according to him, that indigenous games continue to leave their imprint on modern sports. Alongside language, art, music, dance, folklore...

Gianfranco Staccioli, Italian sociologist and pedagogist, adopts a resolutely didactic approach to legitimize, in the field of indigenous games, the pedagogical intervention as a formative experience, that is to say which brings a positive change in those for whom it is intended. According to the author, and here he uses the expression of non-consciousness of sociologists, the player deludes himself, as in the sport situation, if he radically separates the sphere of play from the other spheres of social life. Gianfranco Staccioli considers that the qualities offered by indigenous games are undeniable because they allow a multiplicity of roles, an enhancement of the right to be different, a consideration of local history. The game makes possible a moral education because it reveals a specific conception of life. This is why, according to the author, indigenous sports and games must be rediscovered by young people, in particular by reintroducing them in the school circuit, in an appropriate manner. The author concludes that indigenous sports and games, unlike most recreational and sporting

réintroduisant notamment dans le circuit scolaire, de manière appropriée. L'auteur en conclut que les jeux de tradition, contrairement à la plupart des pratiques ludiques et sportives, ne se résument pas à des actions motrices mais constituent des expériences totales. Il en vient même à affirmer, contrairement à la représentation habituelle, que les jeux traditionnels sont les véritables modèles éducatifs et non pas les sports institutionnalisés qui, eux, privilégient la notion d'accomplissement.

Pere Lavega, sociologue espagnol, met en avant les vertus pédagogiques des jeux traditionnels, dans leurs dimensions externes (éducatives, culturelles, relationnelles, symboliques) et dans leurs dimensions internes (motrices et réglementaires). En les mesurant et les comparant aux sports modernes qui privilégient l'affrontement compétitif, la mesure de la performance, l'ordonnancement du spectacle, l'auteur estime que les apprentissages relatifs aux jeux traditionnels doivent porter sur toutes ces dimensions. Pere Lavega montre en particulier que les jeux traditionnels mobilisent judicieusement les multiples ressources de l'environnement : adaptation à la topographie, récupération de matériaux, transformation d'objets de la vie quotidienne. Les vertus pédagogiques des jeux traditionnels lui semblent incontestables, en matière de maîtrise du temps, de connaissance des autres, d'appropriation de l'espace, d'adhésion aux valeurs du groupe. L'auteur mentionne des réalisations concrètes menées en Catalogne autour des jeux traditionnels qui prouvent, si besoin était, le bien-fondé d'une pédagogie adaptée.

Henning Eichberg, historien et philosophe danois d'origine allemande, nous fait retrouver la culture *Inuit* et ses jeux basés

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sur le combat, l'équilibre, la course, l'adresse, la force. A partir d'une interrogation plus précise sur les nombreux jeux l'auteur mène une réflexion philosophique sur la place du défi, de l'engagement, du rire, de la violence dans la civilisation et sur l'éventuelle nécessité d'une transmission pédagogique des expériences ludiques. L'analyse inclut en outre la question récurrente des différences entre jeux et sports. Henning Eichberg s'inspire des théories de Norbert Elias sur le processus de civilisation pour opposer la force brutale et la technique, le rire carnavalesque et le sérieux sportif. L'auteur conteste les thèses fonctionnalistes qui analysent ces pratiques de compétition par leurs fonctions sociales d'intégration, de développement, de régulation, d'identification. Il leur préfère les approches philosophiques qui mettent en avant la subjectivité des participants, le but du jeu étant moins de remporter une victoire que de tester ses propres limites et d'expérimenter sa force intérieure.

Pierre Parlebas, sociologue et pédagogue français, porte un regard anthropologique sur la filiation et la transmission des jeux. Il part du principe que les peuples se distinguent autant par leurs jeux que par leurs structures de parenté, leurs productions langagières ou leurs formes d'habitat. C'est le concept d'ethnomotricité qui lui permet de rendre compte de cette diversité ludique et du lien entre les jeux corporels, qu'il appelle aussi sportifs, et la société dans laquelle ils se pratiquent. Pierre Parlebas constate que la question générale de l'héritage ludique pose problème puisque des jeux identiques sont observables dans des sociétés éloignées. Pierre Parlebas en vient à condamner fortement l'idée évolutionniste selon laquelle les sports représentent un progrès, et donc une étape supérieure, par rapport aux jeux traditionnels. Ceux-ci mobilisent en réalité des cultures motrices

philosophical reflection on the place of challenge, commitment, laughter, violence in civilization and on the possible need for an educational transmission of playful (Ludic) experiences. The analysis also includes the recurring question of the differences between games and sports. Henning Eichberg is inspired by the theories of Norbert Elias on the process of civilization to oppose brutal force and technique, carnivalesque laughter and sport seriousness. The author contests the functionalist theses which analyze these practices of competition by their social functions of integration, development, regulation, identification. He prefers philosophical approaches that highlight the subjectivity of the participants, the goal of the game being less to win a victory than to test one's own limits and experience one's inner strength.

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Guy Jaouen, chercheur en anthropologie culturelle, revient sur le thème général des rencontres de Nantes en faisant le point sur la situation générale. Pour conclure il introduit un débat qui dépasse largement un débat sur le sport ou les jeux, car ce débat est en réalité un débat de société sur les relations que nous voulons construire pour la société de demain et donc ce que nous voulons transmettre aux générations futures. Les textes apportent aux lecteurs des éléments de réponse pour lui permettre de faire sa propre opinion.

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