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**Source:** Przegląd Socjologiczny

Sociological Review

**Location:** Poland

**IssueNr:** 3

**IssueYear:** 2013

**Author(s):** Wojciech Woźniak

**Title:** EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL

**Citation style:** Wojciech Woźniak. "EDITORIAL". Przegląd Socjologiczny 3:7-11.

<http://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=18023>

## EDITORIAL

There is no doubt that contemporary role of sport exceeds the borders of competition and spectatorship. As a cultural, anthropological and sociological phenomenon influencing politics and economies, it has been studied from the whole range of perspectives available to social scientists. Even though there is long-lasting tradition of social studies on sport in Poland, with the prominent journal "International Review for Sociology of Sport" currently published by SAGE, established in Poland in 1966 and affiliated at the Academy of Physical Education in Warsaw, for many years the research into the world of football has been scarce in Poland. Usually, any research agenda was realized within the Academies of Physical Education, with Polish scholars rarely taking part in academic debates in international forums.

The inspiration for this volume has been drawn from the several "special volumes" of the leading scientific journals which have been published in the past few years. The issues regarding globalization and glocalization of football, and the impact of Sport Mega Events in particular, have been approached and vigorously debated from various perspectives in international scientific discourse, and not only in journals specializing in social studies of sport. The examples include: *Sociological Review* (2006, vol. 54, issue supplement 2), *Global Networks* (2007, vol. 7, issue 2), *Urban Studies* (2011, vol. 48, no 15), *British Journal of Sociology* (2012, vol. 63, issue 2), *Environment and Planning* (2012, virtual issue: Sport mega events and the city), *International Journal of Cultural Policy* (2008, vol. 14, no 4).

Thus, the proposed volume is devoted to a topic which is already vividly debated in the contemporary sociology of sport, namely the multidimensional impact of globalization in the world of football and football communities at the European, national, regional and local levels.

When approaching the interrelation between sport and globalization we follow the pathway of Richard Giulianotti and Roland Robertson, who understand globalization as being characterized by two distinct but intertwined processes: increased subjective consciousness of the world, being a single place as perceived

by social actors, and intensification of cultural and social ‘connectivity’ (e.g. through telecommunication and rapid long-distance international travel). Both authors analyze the cultural, socio-political and economic processes occurring on a global scale, also paying special attention to the interrelations between local/particular and global/universal dimensions of the process [2012]. In analysing actors operating globally, they research global clubs, national sport federations and their umbrella organizations (e.g. FIFA and UEFA), whose *modus operandi* in contemporary times is very similar to the way Transnational Corporations operate on a global market. The end result is the internationalization and popularization of sport, football in particular, accompanied by the radical commercialization of the game and hyper-commodification of its social surroundings. However, the aforementioned authors also point to the growing issues of social exclusion stemming from the mercantilization of sport and at the actions undertaken in the name of re-democratization of the world of sport and resistance to market tyranny. The importance of sport in the process of globalization is growing. In some areas contemporary global game football strengthens globalization, and viewed from various angles it can be seen as a perfect mirror reflecting various processes [2009: 2].

The introductory article to the topic is provided by one of the most prominent scholars in the field – Richard Giulianotti. His paper summarizes the sociological debate concerning the main aspects of the interrelationship between sport and globalization, as approached in theoretical considerations and empirical studies. Giulianotti provides a historical overview of the global processes influencing sport, with particular attention paid to the take-off period of globalization (from 1870 up to the 1920s). This paves the way for analysis of the major socio-cultural and political-economic aspects of global sport.

The subsequent chapters by Wojciech Woźniak and Jacek Burski are devoted to the social studies on Sport Mega Events, which are the most important manifestations of the truly global nature of contemporary sport (see: Roche 2000). The papers by Woźniak and Burski examine the UEFA European Championships in Football held in Poland and Ukraine in 2012. The Euro 2012 was the biggest sport event ever organized in Poland to date. Even if limited to the participants from just one continent, the European Championships remain one of the largest sport events in the world, after the Olympic Games and the World Cup in football (see: Klauser 2011: 4; Gratton, Shibli, Coleman 2006: 41).

Woźniak’s chapter approaches the political, economic and social consequences of the event, concentrating exclusively on the Polish part of the Euro 2012. The author points at some of the unique features in these areas, particularly concern-

ing the public discourse surrounding the event. Euro 2012 was unanimously supported by all major political forces in Poland and a significant majority of mainstream media. Thus, the enormous public spending was subject to neither strict scrutiny and control, nor criticism, neither from the political sphere nor from the media. The discursive strategies employed by the political elites and media tended to present Euro 2012 as a major challenge and – afterwards – an unprecedented success. These claims were not subjected to sufficient research on the part of critically-oriented academic circles. The preliminary analysis of the costs and benefits stemming from Euro 2012 suggest that the statements of Horne and Manzenreiter remain valid in this context (2006: 9): The ‘legacies’ – whether social, cultural, environmental, political, economic or sporting – are the greatest attraction but also form part of the ‘known unknowns’, of sports mega-events. They create the ‘allure of global games’ – perhaps especially for developing economies. At the same time it seems evident that forecasts of the benefits are nearly always wrong.

According to Jacek Burski, Euro 2012 constitutes a defining moment in the history of Polish football fandom, particularly in terms of discursive practices surrounding this social phenomenon. In his paper, not only the public discourse but also data from qualitative interviews with traditional supporters of one of Polish clubs serve as the basis for discussing the transformation of football spectatorship in the Polish context.

The chapter written by Brazilian scholars Wanderley Marchi Júnior and Bárbara Schausteck de Almeida concentrates on the unprecedented fact that in the forthcoming years Brazil will face the challenges surrounding the hosting of two of the biggest Sport Mega Events in the world: World Cup in football in 2014, and the 2016 Summer Olympics – Rio de Janeiro 2016. The authors approach the latter event by providing an analysis of the press discourse surrounding the bidding process and the selection of Rio de Janeiro as the host of the Olympic Games. This paper is one of the very first examples of an analysis devoted to the first-ever Olympic Games to be hosted in South America, by the country which in recent years has gained growing prominence as the leader of Latin America and, as a BRICS country, is one of the major emerging economies in the world.

The second part of the volume undertakes a more bottom-up approach. It refers to the processes through which glocalization occurs, namely: how local cultures adapt and redefine any global cultural products to suit their particular needs, beliefs and customs (Robertson, Giulianotti 2004: 546).

In the context of the growing commercialization of football in the contemporary phase of globalization, Marcin Gońda presents various strategies of resistance to

the hegemony of the neoliberal market-oriented processes. Growing opposition to the commodification of the global game is illustrated using a set of examples from various European countries, where the fan mobilization could be described by umbrella term: “against modern football”. Social movements target the owners of the clubs for the increasing prices of the tickets and protest against the reforms introduced by national football governing bodies or public and private security forces, policing and penalizing the traditional way of spectatorship. The main “evils” of contemporary football are often symbolically embedded in the form of Sport Mega Events, being in its contemporary form the ultimate outcome of the commercialization of football.

In his paper, Radosław Kossakowski utilizes his the empirical data he gathered during fieldwork among the fans of the Dutch club Twente Enschede. He analyzes the interplay between local/regional identity rooted in traditional local communities and historical legacies of the region, and the pressure from the global processes driven by the growing commodification and marketization of the game. The club, from the region of Overijssel, is deeply rooted in local and regional traditions and proud of its heritage; but it is also exposed to the pressures arising from global processes and is involved in international European competition and open towards the players from all over the world. It serves as an excellent example for discussing the contemporary characteristics of interrelations between the global and the glocal.

In the concluding chapter, Hans K. Hognestad approaches various theoretical perspectives present in the contemporary debate on globalization in sport to trace changes in fans’ affiliations and allegiances. Using his experiences from empirical studies conducted among British and Norwegian fans, Hognestad shows that complex, multiple identities replace the traditional: local, regional or national loyalties. The transnationalization and de-territorialization of the world of football is accompanied by the transformation of its spectatorship, both in terms of matchday experiences as well as long-lasting commitments towards particular clubs and national teams.

The papers in this volume apply mostly descriptive and rather idiographic perspectives. Thus, this volume does not aspire to fully recognize the multitude of aspects and influences of globalization on the world of sport, and its interrelations with culture, economy, politics, identity formation, local policies and social problems. It attempts, rather modestly, to present some recent examples from the rich and multidimensional body of research into global and glocal processes occurring in the world of football. We hope it will contribute to furthering the scholarly debate and enhancing the exchange of thoughts and ideas between the

members of academic community in Poland, opening up the forum for more internationally-oriented debate on the contemporary issues regarding football and football spectatorship in the context of transformative social, political and economic realities. It also needs to be noted that the rationale behind the selection of the papers was to open up the forum to young researchers who are on a verge of their academic careers and who could contribute with a fresh approach to the debate over the social meanings of sport. The exceptions were made in case of Richard Giulianotti, probably the most prominent contemporary author in the field, and Hans K. Hognestad, both established researchers with a treasure of fieldwork experience.

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