

Sport and multiculturalism: a European perspective

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1. Introduction

The European Union has its origins in a recognition of the importance, not merely of economic and political cooperation but also of the need for a cultural pluralism based on respect of difference, the promotion of equality, and tolerance, and an opposition to discriminatory practices. The importance of respect for cultural diversity has, if anything, grown in the period since the Treaty of Rome as the processes of globalisation have accelerated, and the EU expanded. However, while states adopt anti-discriminatory legislation, nevertheless intolerance of cultural difference and racism, continue to be experienced in many communities.

Within this context a range of fields of action have been identified which can help to promote intercultural understanding and mutual respect within and between communities, including legislation (on human rights, political rights, residency, nationality etc.), education, and cultural policy. Sport is one such area of policy activity. However though claims about the use of sport for social integration purposes are widely made, such claims are rarely made with the support of evidence or detailed analysis of what social integration is, or how it may be achieved.

The need to address this issue was the primary motivation on the part of the European Commission DG Education and Culture in commissioning a study from the Institute of Sport and Leisure Policy and PMP Consultants to evaluate the ways in which sport has been used to reduce intercultural tensions and to map out the methods used and benefits claimed for such policy goals in each of the 25 Member States. The study was submitted to the Commission in September 2004 (Amara, Aquilina, Henry, & Taylor, 2004) and considered by the Council of Ministers in September 2005. I will draw on aspects of this research, together with a second project on sport as a vehicle of social inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers also funded by the European Commission, this time as part of the European Year of Education through Sport (Amara et al., 2005), and finally I will draw more briefly on a project undertaken for the *IOC on Women and Leadership in the Olympic Movement* (Henry et al., 2004).

The presentation will be structured around addressing three themes:

- The first theme relates to the question of how concepts of multiculturalism or interculturalism, nationality and citizenship can be linked to sports policy. This is essentially a conceptual ground clearing exercise but draws on some empirical data from the first of the studies referred to earlier.
- The second addresses the question of how we can conceptualise (and therefore evaluate) the benefits which might be claimed to accrue from sporting projects in terms of multicultural or integration policy.
- The third theme relates to the issue of gender, multiculturalism and sports policy.

2. Concepts of multiculturalism, interculturalism and their relationship to sports policy

In undertaking the study of sport and multicultural dialogue in the Member States of the EU, three stages in information gathering were employed. The first was simply to seek baseline information in terms of the homogeneity or heterogeneity of the populations; the nature of the systems of sports provision; and the existence and nature of sports projects targeted at the social integration of cultural minorities. The second

stage was to identify what, if any, evaluation had taken place in regard to these schemes: and the third stage involved a focus on four case study states, France, Germany, Poland and the UK, where more detailed analysis of particular projects was undertaken.

One of the significant challenges which this task presented was how to categorise the different policy approaches adopted. In most cases there was little explanation of what the policy goals were of such projects and how they related to policies of integration, multiculturalism and the like. The task of establishing how effective such policies might be inevitably therefore required an account of the competing philosophies of multiculturalism.

In the literature on multiculturalism and policy perhaps the commonest distinction made is between policies of integration on the one hand; and assimilation on the other. **Integration** in this context is defined as the process whereby a minority group adapts itself to a majority society and is accorded equality of rights and treatment; while the term **assimilation** is used in relation to the 'absorption' of ethnic minority and immigrant population cultures into the cultures and practices of the host society. Assimilation thus implies both acculturation in the adoption of mainstream cultural norms, and deculturation, the gradual loss of indigenous cultural distinctiveness. Different concepts of integration and / or assimilation are bound up with the way that different states understand national identity, and these concepts are a product of the processes of nation-building, democratisation, and the experience of international relations, particularly colonial and post-colonial relations.

The decision to focus on France, Germany, Poland and the UK was based on the historically distinctive core concepts of national identity and citizenship with which three at least of these states have traditionally been associated. The origins of modern French thought in relation to national identity derive from the French Revolution with the replacement of allegiance to a monarchy by the voluntary adoption of republican values of freedom and equality. Nationalism was an expression of the willingness of groups with differing cultural, linguistic, religious or ethnic backgrounds to accept a common political project guaranteeing universal rights for all. Acceptance of the political project however also required acceptance of norms of citizenship, organised around a secular and unified notion of French identity. Thus just as languages spoken regionally, such as Breton, were suppressed in the 19th and early 20th century, the cultural symbols of ethnic or religious difference are banished from public life by the French state in the contemporary context (as in the recent case of discussions about the wearing of the veil in schools, or in other public institutions such as sports centres).

While the French notion of a national culture depends upon shared political will, the German tradition of nationalism, stemming from Herder and Fichte, emphasises nationhood as shared culture, language and ethnos. While for the French shared culture was a product of political nationalism, in the German tradition political nationalism was seen as the natural consequence of a shared national culture. Until relatively recently the naturalisation of non-Germans (such as the Turkish minority) was the exception, though social rights (such as access to welfare services) were widely available to immigrant groups. Thus social citizenship rather than political rights of being a German national were what was available to such groups.

The implication of both of these views of national identity is that 'foreign' cultures should not be 'accommodated' within the national culture but rather should be assimilated.

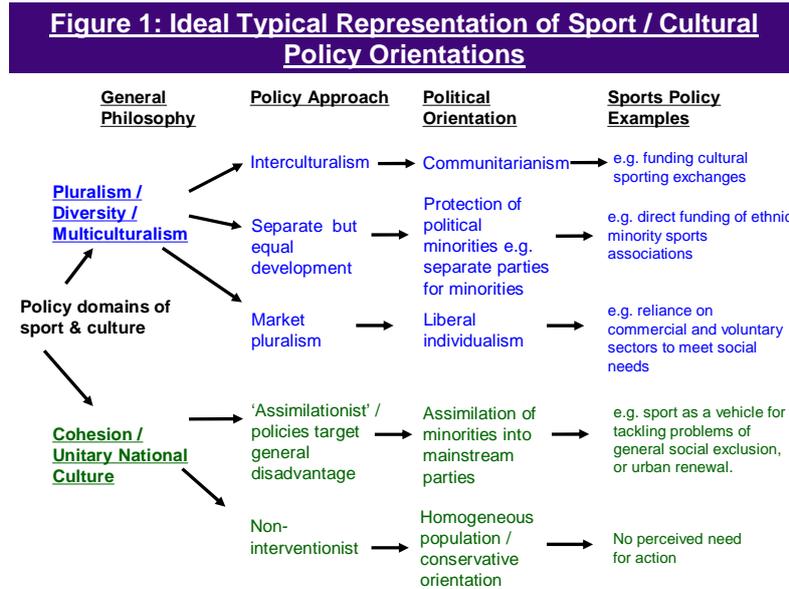
In contrast to these two models, the concept of **multiculturalism** is most clearly associated with the liberal pluralist state which promotes the individual freedoms of its members, fostering the potential for cultural diversity. The existence of national minorities within the borders of the UK state may well have fostered cultural pluralism, but the colonial experience and the associated notion of British subjecthood also fuelled such pluralism with Commonwealth immigrants (at least until the late 1960s) having the right to British citizenship. Political rights in the British context were thus the product, not of hereditary membership of a particular group (as in the German case), or of the voluntary political adherence to the nation (as in the French case), but rather by reference to territorial residence.

While the political circumstances of contemporary Britain, France and Germany may well have shifted from these traditional positions, with the liberalisation of naturalisation rights particularly for second and third generation "foreign" inhabitants in Germany, and the tightening of access to citizenship in Britain, nevertheless one might expect to see a residual propensity to adopt multicultural, or integrationist policy stances in Britain with a parallel assimilationist tendency on the part of the German and French states.

The Polish context is somewhat different. Social organisation and thus questions of nationality and citizenship were constructed under very different circumstances and under the communist system, the importance of immigration, ethnicity and of national minorities was minimised. Poland like other Acceding states is still in process of working through its approach to citizenship. However in drawing up its new internal administrative boundaries the significance of national minorities has been recognised.

This schematic representation of the different approaches to national identity and citizenship is significant for the discussion of multiculturalism and sport, and figure 1 maps out the development of sports policy for minorities onto these competing notions of integration and assimilation and the traditions of national identity and citizenship.

This figure highlights five policy approaches, three of which might be most closely associated with pluralism and multiculturalism and two with assimilationist concerns with social cohesion and a unitary national culture. In each of these policy approaches I want to tease out the values which underpin them, their relationship to mainstream political values and programmes, and their implications for sports policy.



The first of the pluralist approaches is that of **interculturalism**, a situation which describes the equal valuation placed on cultures which are brought together to produce a new cultural mix. Such a cultural approach is consistent with the politics of communitarianism (Etzioni, 1993; Tam, 1998). Such a political position values, amongst other things, diversity as a cultural and political resource. A typical sports policy associated with such thinking would be the promotion of cultural interchange between sporting groups.

The second of the pluralist approaches refers to what French commentators refer to in a pejorative manner as '*communautarisme*', meaning **separate but equal development**. Such a philosophy is evident in political terms in the protection of political minorities, for example in providing reserved Parliamentary seats as quotas. In sports policy terms this approach would be manifest in a policy of funding ethnic minority sports associations.

The final multicultural policy approach might be termed **market pluralism**, associated with the classical liberal individualism of the Anglo-Saxon model of the State. Sports policy in such a context would involve the fostering of commercial and voluntary sectors as being the optimal deliverers of diversity in sporting opportunity.

The first of the two 'unitary' policy approaches is thus described as **assimilationist** in that policies are targeted at general conditions (such as social exclusion) and not at serving the needs of particular ethnic minorities. The political orientation associated with this philosophy sees the absorption of minorities into mainstream parties and of minority interests into mainstream policy programmes. Sports policy approaches consistent with this approach address generalist problems such as the use of sport in combating social exclusion, rather than focusing on specific target groups.

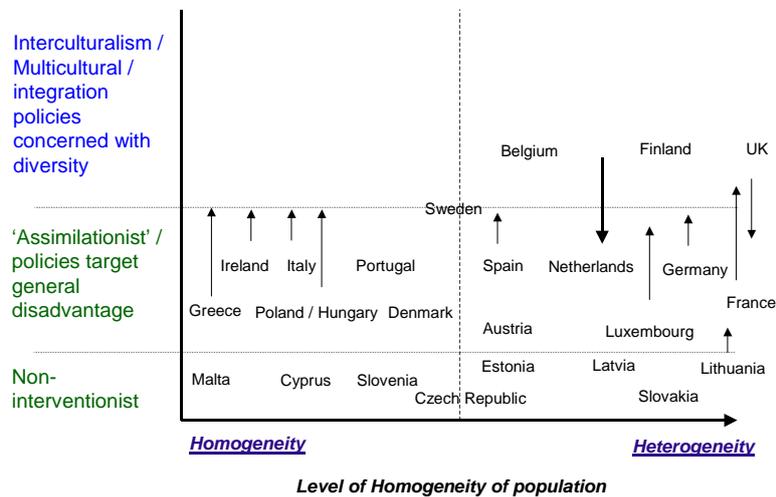
The final policy approach, non-intervention, stems from the perception by politicians of a homogenous population. Politics in such contexts may tend to be conservative as is also the case with sports policies,

since with an homogeneous population there will be little perceived need for targeted policy developments.

Having mapped out these five ideal types, this allowed us to identify broadly where the policy approaches in relation to sport and multiculturalism of individual nation states of the European Union might be located. Figure 2 summarises the results of this process. The figure is organised around two dimensions. On the horizontal axis is the level of homogeneity of the population. This is assessed qualitatively rather than operationalised quantitatively because of the difficulties of finding common bases for conceptualisation and measurement. For example, Britain and France have considerable proportions of their populations from ethnic origins derived from their colonial past from North Africa and from the Indian sub-continent and the Caribbean respectively. However, in the French case census data do not record ethnic origin – but describe all citizens as simply French by definition.

The vertical axis assigns countries to the categories of multicultural, intercultural or assimilationist policy. Here again some caution in interpretation has to be exercised since as Christina Boswell (2003) argues positions on multiculturalism and assimilation “*should not be seen as unified or fixed. One can discern multiple traditions of thought on citizenship and identity within most states, and it is not always a foregone conclusion which concept will come to dominate policy when states are confronted with new immigration challenges*” (p.76). Arrows upwards or downwards in Figure 2 imply a tendency for movement towards a change in policy orientation.

Figure 2: Ideal Typical Location of National Sports Policies for Minorities



With reference to Figure 2 the **first group** of countries in the upper right hand box have actively embraced (at least in terms of policy rhetoric) multicultural policies and have culturally diverse populations, and indeed two of the three (Belgium and Finland) have two official languages. If we consider the case of the UK – its population can be described as heterogeneous by European standards. Not only has it a strong tradition of receiving labour migrants from the Commonwealth in the 20th century, and before this from Ireland and Eastern Europe in the 19th century, but also it has its own national minorities in Scotland,

Wales and Northern Ireland. In policy terms the participation of ethnic minorities has been a very visible issue, with policies under the general theme of Race Equality being developed from the 1960s onwards. A plethora of governmental and non-governmental agencies provide general services targeted at ethnic minorities, together with sporting initiatives such as *Sporting Equals*, *UK Sports Equality and Diversity Strategy* and so on.

In recent years, however, the British Labour Government has sought to be seen taking strong action on immigration and asylum seekers to the criticism of its own supporters. In similar vein Trevor Phillips, Chairman for the Commission on Racial Equality on 3 April argued that Britain's policy of multiculturalism had gone too far, and that there was a need to ensure that a core of British values remained intact (Curick, 2004). Thus there evidence in some areas of government and the quasi-government sector, of a shift from dominantly multicultural or intercultural positions to the monocultural / assimilationist position with an emphasis on protecting cohesion rather than diversity.

The **second group** of countries fall in the middle segment on the right hand side of the diagramme, having culturally diverse populations but a history of largely assimilationist thinking. An example from this category is the case of France. Heterogeneous by virtue of immigration, but also with national minorities (Corsican, Basque, Catalan, Breton, Romany), the dominant philosophy is, as we have argued, is assimilationist, so policy measures in all domains will be seen as 'general' in their target rather than specifically focusing on given minorities. However, the spatial or social concentration of ethnic minorities in particular contexts (parts of the city, or among groups such as "les jeunes en difficulté) means that services may be de facto delivered largely to ethnic minority elements by virtue of their spatial or social concentration. Lionel Arnaud (1999) illustrates this point excellently in his book *Politiques Sportives et Minorités Ethniques* (1999).

In general if not in sporting terms however we can see some movement in the direction of multiculturalism in French society. Examples include the establishment of the first elected Islamic congress, representative of different Muslim communities in France (Islam of France), and the opening of the first Islamic high school Ibn Ruchd in the region of Lille. Furthermore, at the political level, the nomination of Tokia Saifi, French of Algerian origin, in the role of *secrétaire d'Etat au Développement durable*, Hamlaoui Mekachera as *secrétaire d'Etat au Anciens Combattants*, and Aïssa Dermouche the ex-director of l'*Ecole Supérieure de Commerce* de Nantes, as a *préfet* of the region of Jura.

The case of the Netherlands is interesting since it has shown a distinctive shift in policy terms. With a relatively heterogeneous population by virtue of its colonial past, until the late 1990s it pursued a relatively multiculturalist strategy in line with its traditional pluralist, pillarised, political system. However by the late 1990s sympathy for such an approach was on the wane. The right made political gains (for example under Pim Fortijn) and local authorities began to reduce activities and resources spent on multicultural sports initiatives. What had been the twin objectives of the integration of ethnic minorities into mainstream Dutch sports provision, on the one hand, and the promotion of ethnic sporting groups on the other, gave way to a simple emphasis on the former approach.

The **third group** of countries in the middle left hand segment of the figure, are those with relatively homogeneous populations, but which have adopted some assimilationist policies in sport for ethnic minorities. Both Poland and Hungary in their post-communist guises have given greater attention to issues of multiculturalism, though both are relatively homogeneous (in both cases ethnic populations make up around 3% of the total population). Both governments have shown some willingness to promote multicultural initiatives in education and culture. The Hungarian government support for example for initiatives with the Roma population in sport and in education reflect this. In Poland the examples cited for state support of different cultures are through religious sporting organisations though religious identity may be taken as an operational indicator of ethnicity.

The **fourth group** of countries is made up of the three small states of Malta, Cyprus and Slovenia declare themselves as relatively homogeneous though membership of the EU may add to immigration pressures. Cyprus is something of a special case. The response to our questions related to the situation in the Greek community, but the possible reuniting of the Greek and Turkish populations seems likely to provide the need for a new response, since effectively a large national minority will be evident and the relations between the two communities in cultural terms (as well as political and economic terms) will become critical.

The **final group** of countries is made up of former Eastern bloc states, with relatively heterogeneous populations, but with little or no intervention in relation to sports policy for ethnic minorities. There is nevertheless some variation between states. Each of the Baltic States has its own political and cultural trajectories, though in terms of the important issues relating to inter-ethnic relations, the situations in Latvia and Estonia have been quite different from that in Lithuania. While Estonia's population consists of 61.5% Estonians and 30.3% Russians, and Latvia's consists of 52% Latvians and 34% Russians, Lithuania's population is 79.6% Lithuanian and 9.4% Russian together with 7.0% of Poles. In addition, upon restoration of independence, the Lithuanian Government offered free choice of citizenship to all permanent residents except Soviet military personnel and their families and the vast majority opted for Lithuanian citizenship.

In Estonia and Latvia the situation is very different. Instead of offering citizenship to all residents the Estonian and Latvian Governments restricted automatic citizenship to those who had held it before the Soviet occupation and their direct descendants. Although citizenship laws have subsequently been liberalised to some degree in both countries, largely as a product of external pressures, this has not been without difficulties (in Latvia for example a national referendum on the liberalising legislation was forced by opposition), and as late as July 2004 a Russian sponsored resolution to the meeting of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe was debated, which criticised both countries for failing to implement legislation. In these circumstances, it is perhaps unsurprising that in both of these states, there is little evidence that the use of sport for integration has been developed. In both cases, and in particular in Latvia, the fear of eventual domination of a Russian speaking population (emotively referred to as 'statistical genocide') has led to an emphasis on linguistic and cultural assimilation.

This brings us to the issue of where Spain might be located in this schema. On the evidence provided by our research partners at the Centre for Olympic Studies, one can trace a slight but significant trend from an assimilationist to an integrationist policy orientation. Until the 1980s Spain was regarded as a country of emigration rather than immigration, and what immigration policy there was, was targeted at facilitating immigrants' access to the rights and obligations of a Spanish citizen. As the influx of immigration has grown considerably in recent years so also policy has broadened, particularly under the influence of NGOs, which have pressed effectively for access by immigrant groups to the benefits of the welfare state, and which have also been responsible at the local level for fostering some sporting initiatives. The examples cited by our research partners here in Barcelona include, the *Asociación Socio-cultural Ibn Batuta* from the Raval neighbourhood of Barcelona, or the Hispano-Pakistani Cultural Association from Sant-Adria de Besos. This provides some indication of a greater sensitivity to, or acceptance of, cultural diversity, as with many of the Western European members of the EU, with a decreasing emphasis on assimilationist policies.

In this section of the presentation I have sought firstly to map out the philosophies concerning multiculturalism, citizenship and national identity and subsequently to clarify the policy implications of those philosophies for sports policy. Secondly I have sought to evaluate where individual states sit within such a policy map. Without such conceptual clarity, I would argue, it becomes impossible to evaluate policy approaches adopted by various bodies, since the same policy outcome may be evaluated negatively by some (for example those concerned to achieve assimilation) while being viewed positively by others (those concerned to achieve multicultural integration) given different policy philosophies and goals. We move on now from the 'big picture' to consider briefly the detail of local projects and what they might seek to achieve.

3. If sport is used for the purposes of integration how can we explain and therefore evaluate impact in terms of benefits?

In order to address this question I want to introduce very briefly, three vignettes of projects whose activities we evaluated as part of our study on sport and the social inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers (see Table 1).

The first of the schemes is the Algerian Association in Nottingham, a relatively new association (less than five years old) with more than 200 members drawn from a variety of African nationalities. It operates some activities for members' children but with little female take up, and its principal adult activity in relation to sport is Sunday morning football which it organises in a local park.

The second of the schemes is the Bosnia-Herzegovina Community Centre in Derby. This is rather more established, having been in operation for over ten years since the start of the Balkan conflict. Among its social activities are sports. It formally participates in local basketball leagues, running its own team (under an English name) and some of its players now play for English teams in the league. It operates some activities for young people including some folk dancing predominantly for young women and girls.

The third project is the Madeley Community Centre project which operates in the ... area of Derby. The project was set up with the cooperation of the police and was intended to bring together through sport two ethnic minorities, the established British Pakistani local community and the influx of Kurds seeking asylum

Table 1 | Examples of Local Sports Projects in East Midlands Region of England Making Provision for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Algerian Society in Nottingham

Target Group: initially Algerian subsequently African refugees

Activities: sport (for males) largely soccer; provision for children and youth (male)

Benefits claimed: positive (mental and psychological elements) of sport and the role that it can play in breaking the state of isolation and depression that an asylum seeker or a refugee is going through during his/ or her stages of settlement; building bridges with the local community and local authorities

Evidence Cited: 200+ members, drawing refugees and asylum seekers from other communities. Ethnographic data. (Some evidence of failure – violence between players; failed links with local authority)

Derby Bosnia-Herzegovina Community Association

Target Group: Bosnian Refugee community in Derby

Activities: sport with other refugee groups and members of the local ethnic community, and with host population; folkloric dance club (popular among girls).

Benefits claimed: acts as an intermediary between the Bosnian community and the local authorities, facilitates integration into the British society and openness towards the local host community; peaceful sporting involvement of Bosnian and Serb and Roma participants.

Evidence cited: critical self evaluation: examples of successful and unsuccessful practice.

Madeley Community Project (Kurdish Refugees)

Target group: Kurdish refugees and local British Pakistani community

Activities: Initiating football games, and socio-cultural activities to bring together Asian British and Kurdish asylum seekers.

Benefits Claimed: initiate a dialogue with the aim to decrease tensions between the two communities. Furthermore, to reduce criminality and violence by strengthening shared religious (Islamic) values.

Evidence cited: Positive – success in integrating Kurdish members in British Pakistani teams

In undertaking a review of projects in the UK dealing with sporting provision for refugees and asylum seekers, and in reviewing the literature on sport and ethnic minorities, we can characterise the direct benefits as occurring at two levels, that is at the level of personal and of social capital. There are a number of secondary benefits that might be claimed to stem from an enrichment of personal and social capital but the claims to these are often more tenuous and less well founded in evidence. Nevertheless in respect of individual and social capital I will seek to illustrate by reference to our own case study material.

In terms of personal capital we are referring to the development of the skills, competences and personal attributes which help the individual to benefit from and contribute to the life of the community in which s/he lives. These skills and competences might be categorised under three sub-headings:

- (a) Physical capital: developing skills, physical competences which might otherwise have been denied to individuals, for example, the children of refugee families when they come as refugees from very difficult situations. Instilling of exercise as an intrinsic part of young people's time schedules, contributing to health.
- (b) Psychological capital: e.g. developing self-confidence, and self esteem; dealing with trauma – re-establishing emotional stability; providing the opportunities for intrinsic enjoyment of sport, and the development of a positive mind-set.
- (c) Personal social capital: e.g. developing trust in others; widening social networks.

For reasons of space and time, I will not comment in detail on the individual capital gains to be made, since it is perhaps at the individual level that the benefits of sporting involvement are most compellingly demonstrated in the literature. However I will underline one crucial point. In undertaking our review of the sporting projects for refugees and asylum seekers, we initially assumed that since the position of some ethnic groups (such as refugees) was so difficult, that sport might be the last of their priorities. However, it surprised us to some extent to discover how important sport was even to some individuals who had other pressing needs in terms of security, food, and economic resources.

A quote from a Congolese asylum seeker serves to illustrate this point. He described to us what his life was like, a continual struggle from day to day to feed and clothe himself. Because his application for asylum was under review by the Home Office, his future was uncertain, and he had little or no 'future perspective'. The only weekly event he could look forward to with a degree of security was taking part in the informal football sessions organised by the Algerian Association in Nottingham.

'There is a need for sport...sport can help to break the isolation of refugees and asylum seekers even some of their family members...if there is within the community a team playing every Sunday ...let me [pass] my time meeting other people instead of sitting alone ..., playing around ...try to break up the isolation, and the misery that you are going through for that particular time...sport is very important, particularly for people who are going through stress...' (Congolese asylum seeker)

The football sessions were described as giving structure to his week and as the only time when he could feel relief from the pressure of his situation and simply enjoy the company of others.

4. Social capital

While the evidence of links between sport and physical and psychological health are reasonably well demonstrated in general terms in the literature, the link between sports participation and social capital is rather more tenuous. However such claims are central to the thinking underpinning sport and multiculturalism or interculturalism. The term social capital refers to the development of capital at community level rather than the level of the individual. It is most closely associated with the work of the sociologists, James Coleman (Coleman, 1988-9; 1994) and Pierre Bourdieu (1989), and the political scientist Robert Putnam (2000). Each has different targets in terms of their usage of the term: Coleman is concerned to explain why rational individuals make decisions apparently for the collective good; Bourdieu is concerned with identifying mechanisms by which privileged groups maintain social distance from the less privileged; and Putnam is concerned to explain the impact of the perceived decline in public trust and organic solidarity. However, in the context of recent public policy debates, development of Putnam's usage has been most significant. For Putnam declining social capital as measured by reduction in political, religious, informal and other forms of civic engagement, are accompanied by a decline in norms of trust and reciprocity in the general population, with an associated decline in a sense of local identity, solidarity and mutual support, and increasing individual alienation.

Putnam's conceptualisation of social capital has been usefully refined by Michael Woolcock (1998; 2001) who identifies three types of such capital:

- (i) Bonding capital: This refers to the informal realm, the close ties that help people to get by. These are usually with family, friends and neighbours, or more broadly within the context of ethnic minorities, with members of the same national group. The use of sport to develop bonding capital is evident especially in examples such as the Derby Bosnia Herzegovina Community Association which brought together not only Bosnian Muslims but also Serb Orthodox Christian refugees within its membership. Ironically it was reported that building links through sport was easier among this displaced population than it would be in the country of origin.

Bonding through sport however did not always happen naturally. The Algerian Association reported difficulties and even violence on the football pitch between members of opposing factions from Algeria. The need for proactive management of the sporting interaction was underlined by such circumstances, and this is a point to which I will return.

- (ii) Bridging capital – This occurs in the civic realm, in the context of our concerns this means beyond the immediate ethnic group. It involves for example building bridges between refugee and asylum seeker groups and wider civil society in terms of the host community or other ethnic groups. The Madeley Youth and Community Centre Project in Derby sought to build bridges between the local 'host' British Asian community and the Kurdish refugees and asylum seekers who had recently moved into the area, while the Bosnia-Herzegovina Association sought to build bridges in with the local white British community, and both projects enjoyed some success in relation to these goals.

- (iii) Linking capital – This level of capital refers to the resources to construct links to organisations and systems that can help people gain resources and bring about broader change. In the case of the Madeley Project, links with the Police and the local authority were engendered by the project. Because the Police were involved in the organisation of the project, channels of communication were opened up which organisers argued provided a conduit for discussion with other institutions such as the local authority and the medical services.

What these brief examples point to is some of the roles sport can play in integrative processes. However we should perhaps add two caveats. The first is that sports projects can only be part of such wider capital building projects. Multi-agency and multi policy intervention is required if bonding, bridging and / or linking capital is to be developed.

The second caveat is that one should not generalise about the benefits of 'sport' and individual or community development, since different sport forms delivered in different ways can achieve different types of goals. As Fred Coalter (Coalter, 2004) has pointed out sports or physical recreations can take many forms involving individual, partner, or team games; strategy or physical skill; cognitive or motor skills; contact or non-contact activities; and can be played competitively or recreationally. Different form of sport

will thus have different impacts. For example, if the aim is to enhance individual capital by raising self esteem, placing emphasis on competitive sport is likely to be problematic, since it means that for some there will be an experience of failure which may have negative effects on self esteem. Similarly, in relation to social capital, the make up of teams can be problematic if it reinforces 'us' and 'them' categories which one is trying to break down. Bridging capital between communities is unlikely to be developed if rivalries between the communities are reinforced by sporting competition. In summary, the use of sport to achieve such goals requires some care in the selection of the types of activities to be used, and in management in the ways they are played

5. Gender and Multiculturalism

The focus of my presentation so far has been on the local level, and predominantly on provision for male members of ethnic groups. What I wish to do in this final section is to focus on the global level by addressing policy on the part of a global organisation, the International Olympic Committee, and to focus in particular on policy in relation to gender.

In the field of international relations perhaps the most influential text of recent years has been Samuel Huntington's book, *the Clash of Civilisations*. The core of Huntington's argument is that, in the realignment of interests in the post-Cold War period after 1990, the East-West divide has been replaced by a world of nine separate 'civilisational blocks' Western, Latin American, African, Islamic, Sinic, Hindu, Orthodox, Buddhist, and Japanese (Huntington, 1996: pp. 26-7). He describes these civilisations in fairly monolithic terms and argues that at base they reflect mutually incompatible sets of values. Although the single dominant 'Other' of the Cold War system, Communism, has been replaced by several oppositional cultures, perhaps the dominant 'Other' for the West in the new system is Islam.

There is however a fundamental flaw in Huntington's argument as a number of authors have pointed out (Sardar, 1998; Tibi, 2001). While he describes cultures in monolithic terms there is considerable variation within what he terms civilisational blocks, such that on many issues there will be a greater level of agreement between members of **different cultures**, than between members of a **single culture**. Thus, for example, in relation to gender equity, in the West there are varying types of anti-feminist and pro-feminist position, whereas construction of a consensus concerning action for gender equity across cultures, between, Chinese, Hindu, Muslim and Western feminists, for example, will be likely to be much more straightforward.

So Huntington's model of separate cultures does not stand up. Indeed his argument is somewhat pernicious in the sense that he argues that since cultural value systems are effectively mutually exclusive in this kind of context, the only way in which the West can ultimately defend its own values will be by force. This is a dangerous conclusion and one which has been used by some commentators to legitimate action beyond international law.

The study which we conducted for the International Olympic Committee on *Women and Leadership in the*

Olympic Movement was designed to evaluate the factors influencing the success of National Olympic Committee's in meeting targets set for recruitment of women to executive decision making positions (the target being at least 10% by December 2001 and 20% by December 2005) (Henry et al., 2004). One of the factors assumed by many western commentators to explain the failure to meet gender equity goals, is the impact of religion. It is claimed that religious world views are invariably 'traditionalist' and 'conservative' and thus militate against women adopting an equal position in respect of sports administration and executive decision-making. The example which most readily springs to the Western (non-Muslim) mind is that of Muslim practices.

However, while the data for this study, for example, show that women's representation on National Olympic Committee Executive Committees is lower on average in Muslim countries (the average for countries which are members of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference was 7.9% compared to an overall average for all countries of 12.9%), nevertheless to explain this by reference to religion rather than by reference to local cultures is problematic. There are perhaps two principal objections to the 'religion-blaming' strategy. The first is that in the context of this study, it is not only Muslim societies which manifest gender inequality. When such gender inequality is present in Western societies, academic analyses tend to explain this by reference to the concept of patriarchy, but when it is present in Muslim societies it tends to be explained by western commentators by reference to religious practice. Such an argument is inconsistent, and leaves proponents open to the charge of Orientalism (Said, 1991; Volpp, 2001; Winter, 2001). It is important in this context to differentiate between 'religiosity' (the customs and practices associated with a group practising a particular religion) as opposed to religious beliefs, the fundamental tenets of a religious group. The norms and practices (religiosity) may vary from one group to another within the same religious grouping, even where fundamental beliefs are shared. There is a lively debate within Muslim feminist literature about the distinction between 'revealed truth' in the form of the Q'ran and the Hadith on the one hand, and *ijtihad* and the opinions of (male) religious scholars on the other (Stowasser, 1998). Muslim feminists and feminist commentators such as Fatima Mernissi (Mernissi & Lakeland, 1991), Haleh Afshar (1998), Azza Karam (1998) and Salibah et al (Saliba, Allen, & Howard, 2002) show how, for many, it is not Islam but certain male interpretations of Islam, which promulgate gender subordination.

The second fallacious aspect of the argument is that it assumes there is some uniformity of approach to women's roles within and between Muslim societies. This simply is not the case. The differences between the societies of some of the Gulf States and those, for example, of North Africa or Turkey are considerable, as reflected in the differing roles played by women in these societies (Haddad, 1998). Studies such as those by Afshar (1998), Karam (1998), and Ali Ali (2000) show how, even in 'conservative' contexts (Iran and Egypt respectively), different forms of feminism are evident, and their findings warn against a simplistic notion of a single unitary perspective on the appropriate roles for women in wider society. This is reflected also in our own study in which two countries which are members of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (Iran and Gambia) exhibit levels of female membership of NOC Executives which are more than double the average for all countries.

The diversity of interpretation was also very evident in our qualitative data, in relation to the issue of

women's sporting dress, in the responses of three of our four female Muslim interviewees. Of these three interviewees, one is from a North African state, the second from an Asian country, and the third is from the Middle East. Our respondent from North Africa had been a world figure in her sport, and had experienced no problem in wearing the athletic clothing of the era, with the only criterion of concern being to allow freedom of movement to maximise performance.

No I have never had any opposition. I had millions of letters of support when I won which surprised me. Not even one letter of criticism. And I even had letters, let's say, from Saudi Arabia from all the Gulf States, all of North Africa. It was incredible millions of letters, thousands and I am still keeping them. I have never had any negative thoughts from anyone concerning my attire. And I surprised the international media when they saw me and they said – Oh, she is a [nationality], and a Muslim – where is her veil?" and I think when you have a strong belief it is in your heart it is not in your look. ... And even now the race I organise you see a large range of different categories of women, those who are veiled, those who are unveiled, and it's interesting. (Interview 22, Africa)

By contrast the Asian interviewee had actively considered whether the wearing of athletic apparel contravened religious requirements to maintain modesty and had in fact sought the advice of a central religious authority.

A lot of Non-Muslims also asked me ... and I think that, quite often the Muslim women themselves and even the Muslim men also do not understand the Shariah or the Islamic Law, as I said in netball, our girls wear short skirts because that is more convenient, but I did also ask, because I was a bit worried, whether what the girls are doing could be wrong for them in Islam, for them and for me, because I had been with them, I did ask some of the persons who are knowledgeable in Islam, [names Islamic scholar], before he became the religious advisor to the Prime Minister, he was a lecturer at [a local university] before, he said "the most important thing is what is your intention, if your intention is to wear your brief costume so that you can play better and the idea is to win, so that Muslim women could win, then it is otherwise permissible, but, if you wear the short skirts and all that, and the idea is to show off your beautiful legs and all that then of course it is not permissible, it is haram. Now if the men come and watch and they have say, dirty things on their minds, that is their problem, that is their sins, not yours". So I was quite happy, so what we do is, we tell our girls, they wear the skirt when they are playing and when they are in the arena The moment they go out of the arena, they put on their track bottom(Interview 21, Asia)

The third Muslim woman to be interviewed was well known for her very public espousal of separate sports competition for women, performing a leading role in promoting the Islamic Countries Women Sports Federation and the Islamic Countries Women's Sports Games. These Games held three times since their inauguration in 1993 in Iran, provide Muslim women with the opportunity to participate in international competition by holding events in an all-female environment. For this interviewee, there could be no

compromise on the issue of wearing of modest covering for the body in public, and separate competition therefore offers the only possibility for Muslim women's participation.

Translator: After 1989 when she was involved in the NOC as Vice-President, she thought that a women's organisation was necessary and so she founded the organisation for women. The main reason for this was due to the problem of [her country's] women and their clothes during sporting activities. There was a gap between the Islamic countries and other areas of the world in sport. She was given support through the Olympic Committee. She had to travel to Kuwait and Mr Samaranch was there and he gave her support, inviting her to be present in the decision for a women's organisation. (Interview 15, Asia)

Thus the positions adopted on this issue are by no means uniform. Such variety lends support to the criticism of positions adopted by commentators such as Huntington (1996) who seek to portray civilisations in terms of monolithic ideologies. Critics such as Bassam Tibi (2001) have underlined the heterogeneous nature of religiosity in Muslim populations, and such heterogeneity is clearly exemplified by our interviewees.

Azza Karam (1998) outlines three ideal typical feminisms in the context of Egyptian society (while acknowledging that the label 'feminist' may not be one which is readily accepted by some groups of Muslim women despite their common concern to enhance the lives of women). The first of Karam's types is that of **Islamist feminism** which she identifies with "Islamist women ... who are aware of a particular oppression of women, they actively seek to rectify this oppression by recourse to Islamic principles." (Karam, 1998: p. 9). Karam's second type of feminism is **Muslim feminism**, which incorporates women who draw on both human rights and religious discourse and who seek to steer a middle course but who recognise that "a feminism which does not justify itself within Islam is bound to be rejected by the rest of society." (Karam, 1998: p. 11). The third type of feminism is termed secular feminism which relates to those who ground their discourse outside the realm of any religion, whether Christian or Muslim, placing it instead, within the international human rights discourse. Here religion is respected as a private matter for the individual.

I would suggest that the positions adopted by our three respondents reflect aspects of this typology with the Middle Eastern respondent reflecting aspects of Karam's Islamist feminism; the Asian respondent the tradition of 'Muslim feminism'; and the North African respondent, secular (Muslim) feminism. Each such type is associated with the addressing of gender inequities, even though how such inequities are conceived will depend on the particular world view of the individual concerned.

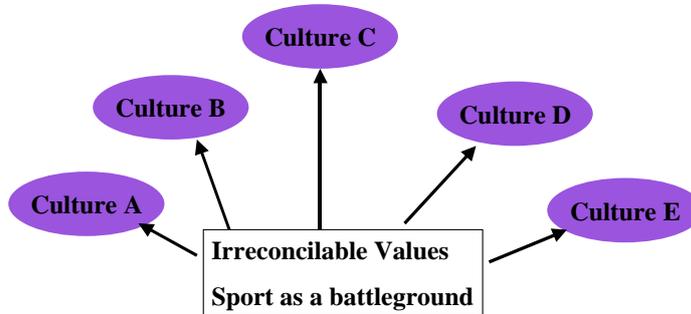
6. Conclusion

The point about this discussion is that it underlines what we are doing in multicultural policy in general, as well as in sport in particular. If we reject the notion of separate and incompatible cultures, and adopt the view that striving for transcultural or intercultural consensus is what we are seeking to achieve, then sport can have a role to play in helping (usually at a micro level) to build such consensus. Figures 3 and 4

illustrate what I have in mind here. Consensus building is related to the approach to ethical construction referred to in Habermas' use development of discourse ethics (Habermas, 1990; Habermas, 1993) (though unlike Habermas I would want to suggest that what can be derived from such discourse are generalised though not necessarily universal moral principles).

I want to end by referring you to the image of a veiled women running with her body covered, winning the 100 metres in the Pan-Arab Championship in 2003 (see Figure 5). It illustrates for me what kinds of compromise are possible. Forms of consensus are not just possible, they are essential, and it is one of our crucial tasks as academics, politicians and policy makers or simply as citizens, to assist in the construction of such consensus. We are fortunate that as sports men and women we have access to a social phenomenon which, though not perfect, can form something of a universal language. Sport cannot solve the fundamental dysfunctions of a global society, but it can form a small part of contributions to wider solutions.

Figure 3: Incompatible Cultures: Huntington’s ‘Clash of Civilisations’ Model



**Figure 4: Recognising Common Humanity
The building of consensus – discursive ethics**

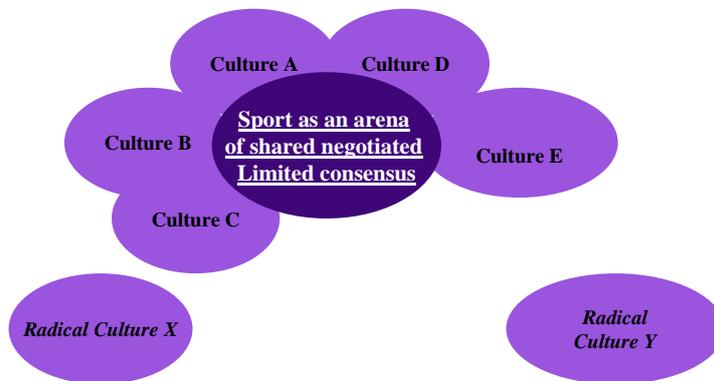


Figure 5: An Illustration of the Cultural Pluralism in Sport: 100 metres Women's Final Pan Arab Athletics Championships 2003



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