

## *chapter one*

# National Identity, Globalization, and Sport

### **SPORT, NATIONALISM, AND NATIONALITY**

It is virtually self-evident that identities are formed in a number of different locations and social practices. As Preston (1997) observes, "Identity is not a single homogeneous stock of traits, images and habits" (4). One important arena for the construction of certain identities (masculinity, for example, or social class) is sport (Jones 1988; Messner 1992; Messner and Sabo 1990). Specifically, sport is clearly linked to the construction and reproduction of the national identities of many people. But how precisely does that process develop? Furthermore, to what extent is the linkage between sport and national identity likely to be weakened as a result of major transformations in global society? In other areas of identity politics we might anticipate change. For example, will sport in the future have less influence in terms of gendered power relations as increasing numbers of women win their fight to play with the boys? How far will the cause of racial integration be furthered by way of multiracial teams in a range of sports? Is it likely that various "sport for all" mechanisms will ensure that in the future all people will have access to all sports irrespective of their socioeconomic status? In each of these areas, of course, there remains considerable room for skepticism as to the likelihood of real change. One theory, however, that is put forward with a greater degree of confidence suggests that, as a result of the process known as globalization, the relationship between sport and *national* identity is self-evidently unravelling to reveal an increasingly homogeneous global sporting culture. The theoretical underpinnings of this particular proposition will

be discussed in the later stages of this chapter. But first it is important to say a little more at the general level about the relationship between sport, nationalism, and national identities.

At a range of major sporting events, fans arrive waving their national flags and with their faces painted in national colors. Seldom do they favor more transnational emblems and insignia. While some fans of the European players in golf's Ryder Cup unfurl the flag of the European Union, many persist in waving their national flags despite the multinational composition of the European team. Rarely do fans wave the colors of sport's major sponsors, except when their names appear on the shirts of a club or a national team. Indeed, although competitors promote their sponsors by wearing certain clothing and using specific equipment, they continue to wave national flags to celebrate victories even, for example, in Grand Prix athletics events where, in practical terms, they are representing only themselves, although technically they remain affiliated in the course of the event to a national federation. Formula One motor racing provides an exception to this general rule, with supporters of Ferrari celebrating the achievements of their team's drivers by waving flags emblazoned with the manufacturer's emblem. Even in this instance, however, the purpose of the exercise is at least quasi-national in that it salutes an Italian car maker. What kind of nationalism is being celebrated in these different examples? To be able to answer that it is necessary first to explore theories of nationalism and national identity in the modern era.

### **NATION, NATIONALISM, AND NATIONALITY**

The nation itself is one of the most discussed concepts in modern social and political thought. Its precise character has been subjected to a wide variety of interpretations, with language, ethnicity, geography, religion, and shared experience all having been cited as fundamental determinants. The picture is clouded still further by the fact that the nation-state, the most universal form of political organization in the modern world, is not always coterminous with the nation, particularly as defined by nationalists. Moreover, key distinctions recur throughout the analysis that follows—between civic and ethnic nationalism, for example, and also between secessionist, unificatory and expansionist nationalist movements—and each of these must be understood if one is to develop a full appreciation of the interaction between sport and national identity in particular social formations.

Forms of nationalism differ markedly from each other. As Kamenka (1993) observes, "Nationalism, it is widely recognized, has a positive side and a negative side: it can be democratic or authoritarian, backward-looking or forward-looking, socialist or conservative, secular or religious,

generous or chauvinist" (85). There are also major disagreements concerning the origins of nations, nationalism, and nationalities. Are they natural phenomena? Or are they products of the imagination and, if so, what factors prompted their intellectual construction? It is impossible to do justice to all of the interpretations of nationalism in a brief discussion such as this. It is important, however, to identify key elements in contemporary discourses on nationalism in order that we may be able to better understand the theoretical and political contexts within which sport and national identities interact.

"As all commentators on nations and nationalism agree," writes Canovan (1996), "this is a subject on which it is extraordinarily hard to get a conceptual grip" (50). Dunn (1994) offers a distinction between the "nation," membership in which is secured through birth ties, and the "state," for which we require legal membership. This is inadequate, however, for a true understanding of the complex relationships between nationality and politics. More useful is the distinction between "ethnic" and "civic" nationalisms, both of which can provide the basis for the formation and maintenance of a nation-state. Clearly, this distinction, in part, reflects a desire, particularly on the part of nationalists themselves, to separate good from evil. However, it is also analytically valuable in its own right since it forces us to consider the precise limits of specific national identities. Ethnic nationalist discourse is very close to assumptions about the primordial and, therefore, natural origins of the nation. It is also often bound up with language and, in some instances, race. It is generally regarded as being unenlightened and exclusive in its political aspirations. Either one belongs or one does not. Membership is not a movable feast. As Smith (1995) observes, "It is often assumed that the intrusion of ethnic elements and sentiments of collective belonging into the life of the nation inevitably breeds exclusiveness and intolerance, and that ethnic closure is the chief basis of many of the current national conflicts that afflict the world" (100).

Civic nationalism, on the other hand, is thought to have emerged with the largely artificial creation of nations and nation-states primarily during the nineteenth century. It celebrates citizenship within particular political entities as opposed to membership in supposedly natural human associations. As a consequence, civic nationalism is inclusive. Subject to immigration controls, anyone can become a member of the civic nation, at least in principle. In between these two extremes lies "social" nationalism. According to Kellas (1991), "This type of nationalism stresses the shared sense of national identity, community and culture, but outsiders can join the nation if they identify with it and adopt its social characteristics" (52). In practice, there is substantial overlap between these different nationalisms. For example, Smith (1995) suggests

that it is inappropriate to assert a clear separation in practice between "civic" and "ethnic" nationalism. In fact, "modern nations are simultaneously and necessarily civic and ethnic" (99). Moreover, Smith (1995) is concerned with the moral judgments often made about these types of nationalism. He argues that:

Not only ethnic but also civic nationalisms may demand the eradication of minority cultures and communities qua communities, on the common assumption, shared by Marxists and liberals, not just of equality through uniformity, but that "high cultures" and "great nations" are necessarily of greater value than "low" cultures and small nations or *ethnies*. (101)

As has been argued elsewhere, therefore, it is important to avoid falling into the trap of regarding self-proclaimed civic nationalists as the good guys of nationalist history and ethnic nationalists as the men and women who wear the black hats (Bairner, 1999). Kamenka (1993) makes a further distinction, between "cultural" and "political" nationalism, and notes that some of the founders of the former, Johann Gottfried von Herder, for example, were deeply distrustful of the latter. According to Smith (1995), however, "The idea that nationalism can be 'returned' to any sphere, even that of culture, is both naive and fundamentally misconceived" (13). As with much else in the study of nationalism and nationality, the relationship between culture and politics can only properly be understood by examining specific examples of the nationalist experience.

How the politics of particular nations are packaged depends to a considerable degree on specific circumstances rather than some deep-rooted commitment to one or other version of the ideology. It is necessary, therefore, to distinguish also between different sorts of nationalist movements as well as between various accounts of the nation. Many studies of nationalist politics are concerned with movements engaged in nation-building activities. Even these, however, assume different forms. In some cases, the nationalism involved is of a separatist type. The aim is to establish a new nation free from an existing empire or multinational state. The idea of this new nation is premised on a sense of social or ethnic national identity that can only find true political accommodation when freed from an unacceptable set of political arrangements. In other instances, the nation-building process seeks to create a nation-state by bringing together disparate regions, tribes, and other premodern social or political formations. Frequently this demands a civic approach to nationalism whereby the people become citizens of the new nation-state while often retaining a sense of identity located elsewhere. In addition, all established nation-states are involved in nationalist political activity to varying degrees. Thus, nationalist politics are implicated in the promotion of existing states and in attempts to engage in territorial expansion.

Although these various forms of nationalist political activity are very different, they share certain assumptions (e.g., about the existence of the nation) and rely, to a greater or lesser degree, on telling stories about the past, constructing national mythologies, and, in some cases, inventing traditions. Moreover, although national identities are partially rooted in the human imagination, the “imagined communities,” to use Benedict Anderson’s phrase (Anderson 1991), that emerge have some foundation in reality as well as at the level of consciousness. As Canovan (1996) suggests, “The cliché that nations depend on consciousness therefore needs to be qualified by the observation that this sort of imagined community is not constituted simply by individual choice in the way that (say) there may be an imagined community of supporters of a football [soccer] team or fans of a pop group” (56). The point is well made although one might question the extent to which some fans may feel that they have had any genuine choice in the matter of selecting a soccer team to follow. In addition, myth making and the invention of tradition are certainly important elements in the construction of national identities (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Indeed, since the role of myth features prominently in the linkage of national identity to sport, it is worth saying a little more about this aspect of nationalist politics.

Nationalism and nationalists are frequently criticized for their over-reliance on myths about who they are and where they come from. What are presented as “facts” are simply untrue. Seeking to defend nationalism from what he regards as unfair criticism, Archard (1995) argues that “national myths are neither fables nor allegories” (475). Rather, “They are intended to be believed in their presented form and for what they actually claim to have been the case.” They are myths “to the extent that they misrepresent what is actual for a purpose.” Archard notes “the impermeability of national myths to intellectual criticism” (477). “They are deeply rooted within popular cultures,” he argues, “and insofar as they do serve important practical purposes, they will continue to be accepted as true” (477–478). Those popular traditions that sustain national myths do, of course, change over time. In addition, the myths themselves deserve criticism when they either lead to harmful consequences or are perpetuated as a result of artificially sustained ignorance or are used to enforce a morally unacceptable state of affairs. However, when we are confronted by myths about national sporting traditions, it is important that we recognize that the myths are not bad simply by virtue of their being myths. Of course, we would also do well to examine the precise ways in which these myths are used and with what ramifications.

But what if all of this discussion is irrelevant to the changing world in which we live? We are told, primarily by hard-line advocates of the globalization thesis, that we live in a postnationalist world. Distinctive iden-

tities, including those centered on the nation, are everywhere being eroded. Indeed, it is a mark of civilization that this should be so. One wonders if this is borne out by the facts. As Smith (1995) observes, "In the era of globalisation, we find ourselves caught in a maelstrom of conflicts over political identities and ethnic fragmentation" (2). Nevertheless, it remains necessary to consider those arguments that point toward ever-increasing homogenization and the creation of a global culture.

#### **NATIONAL IDENTITY AND GLOBALIZATION**

According to Holton (1998), "Globalization has, over the past decade, become a major feature of commentaries on contemporary social life" (1). Underlying all the manifestations of globalization, as Holton suggests, "is the key idea of one single world or human society, in which all regional, national, and local elements are tied together in one interdependent whole" (2). Some commentators regard globalization, understood in this way, as a negative phenomenon that represents "the dominance of Western economic and cultural interests over the rest of the world" (Holton 1998, 2). Others see this same development in a positive, even triumphalist, light. Both types of commentator appear united, however, in the belief that the process described as globalization is both inevitable and all-consuming. There are, of course, pockets of resistance of which nationalism is one of the more potent. But even such a historically vital force as this is presented as being doomed in the face of the onward march of a homogeneous, global society.

However, it can also be argued that those very forces, which are thought by some to be leading toward homogenization, actually produce quite different consequences. Thus, the interpretation that informs the analysis to follow suggests that the resilience of national sentiment is as much a result of processes commonly gathered together under the title of globalization as a futile reaction to them. As the case studies that make up the bulk of the book suggest, the persistence of nationalism as a political force and, even more significantly, the identity politics of formerly submerged nationalities and ethnic groups have actually been facilitated by those developments that are increasingly subsumed under the heading of globalization. To that extent, this book, and specifically this opening chapter, addresses the idea of globalization for the simple reason that the concept has provided a theoretical context in which much of the recent debate on the links between sport, national identities, and international politics has been taking place. There is no implicit suggestion that the process described by the term *globalization* has successfully eradicated either completely or in part the central role of nationality in the contemporary world.

The main focus of the book is on national identity as opposed to globalization, and its ultimate objective is to explain the relationship between sport and national identity in a selection of societies, each of which has of course been affected to a greater or lesser degree by forces associated with globalization. Nevertheless, it is important to consider the development of the concept of globalization and to come to terms with the various ways in which it has been employed to understand the contemporary world, not least because, as has been suggested by Waters (1995), “[G]lobalization may be *the* concept of the 1990s” (1) and is likely to remain with us well into the next millennium.

According to Giddens (1991), “The emergence of globalised orders . . . means that the world we live ‘in’ today is different from that of previous ages” (225). Elsewhere, he comments (1990) on the way in which the relations between local and distant social forms and events have become stretched. Globalization, he claims, “refers to that stretching process, in so far as the modes of connection between different social contexts or regions become networked across the earth’s surface as a whole” (64). For Featherstone and Lash (1995), globalization became “the successor to the debates on modernity and postmodernity in the understanding of sociocultural change and as the central thematic for social theory” (1).

There are always problems involved in using fashionable ideas such as globalization. As one of the concept’s leading exponents, Roland Robertson (1990), observes, there is a danger that it becomes “an intellectual ‘play-zone’—a site for the expression of residual social—theoretical interests, interpretive indulgence, or the display of world—ideological references” (16). However, Robertson himself has become implicated in the intellectual wrangles that may well have served to diminish the status of the concept as an analytical tool with which to make more sense of the contemporary world. For example, Giddens and he have adopted very different positions with reference to the relationship between globalization and modernity. Robertson (1995) writes of the need to avoid “the weaknesses of the proposition that globalization is simply a consequence of modernity” (27). Giddens (1990), on the other hand, argues that modernity “is inherently globalising” and that this is apparent “in some of the most basic characteristics of modern institutions, including particularly their disembeddedness and reflexivity” (63). Elsewhere, he refers to “the globalising tendencies of modernity” and argues that “the globalization of social activity which modernity has served to bring about is in some ways a process of the development of genuinely world-wide ties such as those involved in the global nation-state system or the international division of labour” (Giddens 1991, 21).

In fact, there is little reason why theorists should disagree so profoundly about the nature of the relationship between globalization and

modernity. It is evident that globalizing tendencies have been in operation certainly since the beginning of the modern era. What is described as the process of globalization has quickened in pace in the contemporary era, thereby throwing into some doubt traditional and long-held ideas about time and space. Given earlier global linkages, however, whether this means that we are now witnessing an entirely novel phenomenon is open to doubt. What remains to be seen is whether the greater speed and broader impact of the current phase of globalization mean that the process is more complete than ever before. As a result, it would place in jeopardy earlier sources of identity formation, including the nation. One's response to the likelihood of this scenario will naturally depend on how one understands the nature of globalization and what one considers to be its ramifications. In this sense, the relationship of the concept to the premodern, to modernity or, even, to postmodernity is largely irrelevant.

The question of whether or not globalization has an agency, which also divides opinion, is far less irrelevant. For many of those who do discern a determining agent, their subsequent analysis is interwoven with Marxist or neo-Marxist claims that globalization is rooted in the capitalist economic process. Globalization theories, which owe less to Marxism, argue that although certain elements of the phenomenon are intended, most are accidental and are certainly beyond the control of individuals, states, or even economic systems.

What emerges is that there is no single globalization theory to which all of its proponents have been able to sign up. As Pieterse (1995) points out, "In social science there are as many conceptualizations of globalization as there are disciplines" (45). Thus, economic theory spawns the idea of a global economy and international relations the notion of a global political order. Sociology refers to a world society. Historians speak of a world history. Cultural studies offer us a sense of global communications and worldwide cultural homogenization. According to Pieterse (1995), "All the approaches and themes are relevant if we view globalization as a multidimensional process which, like all significant social processes, unfolds in multiple realms of existence simultaneously" (45). Thus, some theorists are reduced to talking about globalizations rather than globalization and see this concept as an open-ended synthesis of a variety of interdisciplinary approaches (Pieterse 1995). In the light of this apparent confusion, it would be foolish to begin this study by adopting a single definition of globalization. It is more useful instead to isolate a key dichotomy that emerges in various discussions of the subject.

According to Appadurai (1990), "The central problem of today's global interactions is the tension between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization" (295). Pieterse (1995) notes that "the most common



interpretations of globalization are the ideas that the world is becoming more uniform and standardized, through a technological, commercial and cultural synchronization emanating from the west, and that globalization is tied up with modernity" (45). Similarly as Robertson (1995) observes, "Much of the talk about globalization has tended to assume that it is a process which overrides locality, including large-scale locality such as is exhibited in the various ethnic nationalisms which have seemingly arisen in various parts of the world in recent years" (26). Furthermore, according to Robertson (1995), "There is a widespread tendency to regard this problematic as straightforwardly involving a polarity, which assumes its most acute form in the claim that we live in a world of local assertions against globalising trends, a world in which the very idea of locality is sometimes cast as a form of opposition or resistance to the hegemonically global . . ." (29). Thus, we are confronted by a world in which multinational (or transnational) capitalism, a global media and international organizations of various sorts create an increasingly homogeneous world which is challenged only periodically by pockets of resistance.

One of the most common approaches to the dichotomy between homogenization and heterogenization has been to equate globalization with the triumphant march of world capitalism and, indeed, with the worldwide hegemonic domination of American cultural forms. Thus, Featherstone (1993) writes that "the assumption that all particularities, local cultures, would eventually give way under the relentless modernizing force of American cultural imperialism, implied that all particularities were linked together as a symbolic hierarchy" (170). In this way, globalization becomes known by alternative names: Americanization, Coca-colonization, McDonaldization. Since we all consume American fast food and soft drinks, listen to American music, watch American films and television programs, and dress in American-style clothing, we become more and more like Americans and, thus, more and more like each other. According to Barber (*Independent*, 29 August 1998), "Global culture is American." "McWorld," as he describes it, "represents an American push into the future animated by onrushing economic, technological, and ecological forces that demand integration and uniformity and that mesmerises people everywhere with fast music, fast computers, and fast food—MTV, Macintosh, and McDonald's—pressing nations into one homogeneous global culture, one McWorld tied together by communications, information, entertainment and commerce."

But this is to further simplify what actually happens in the real world. For example, in certain countries, particularly those in the Islamic world, there has been overt resistance to the wholesale adoption of American fashions and tastes. Even Barber (*Independent*, 29 August, 1998) admits that "McWorld does take on the cultures of the cultures it swallows up."

thus the pop music accented with reggae and Latino rhythms in the Los Angeles *barrio*, Big Macs served with French wine in Paris or made with Bulgarian beef in eastern Europe, Mickey speaking French at Euro Disney. (*Independent*, 29 August 1998)

But, according to Barber, "in the end, MTV and McDonald's are US cultural icons, seemingly innocent Trojan-American horses nosing their way into other nations' cultures." The result is "a global consumer society composed not of tribesmen—too commercially challenged to shop; nor of citizens—too civically engaged—but of consumers."

Now, of course, it is undeniable that American commodities have an international appeal. Despite long-term protectionist habits, however, the Americans have also been increasingly exposed to the habits and cultural preferences of other countries. Indeed, given the domestic history of the United States, it would be difficult to argue that the Big Mac is more distinctively American than pizza, chow mein, fajitas, or kebabs. One recognizes also that the cross-fertilization of musical styles is an increasingly international phenomenon and that, while fashion has become more and more global, there is no indication that this has involved only the adoption of an American dress sense in the rest of the world. Westernization as opposed to Americanization might seem a more appropriate description of what has been taking place but even this would be to overlook the influence of non-Western societies on social and cultural developments in the United States itself as well as in other Western countries.

According to Robertson (1995), therefore, "There is no good reason, other than recently established convention in some quarters, to define globalization largely in terms of homogenization" (34). He suggests that "it makes no sense to define the global as if the global excludes the local" (34). Indeed, for Robertson (1995), "The debate about global homogenization versus heterogenization should be transcended" (27). As a consequence, there can emerge a more subtle analysis of what is often so loosely described as the globalization process. For Robertson (1995), "It is not a question of *either* homogenization or heterogenization, but rather of the ways in which both of these two tendencies have become features of life across much of the late twentieth-century world" (27). Thus, a more sophisticated approach now tends to dominate the debate. There remains some uncertainty, however, concerning the extent to which globalization is ultimately a homogenizing project.

Appadurai (1990) argues that "the globalization of culture is not the same as its homogenization, but globalization involves the use of a variety of instruments of homogenization" (307). As a result, he suggests that "the central feature of global culture today is the politics of the mutual effort of sameness and difference to cannibalize one another and thus to proclaim their successful hijacking of the twin Enlightenment ideas of the

triumphantly universal and the resiliently particular" (307–308). In his excellent summary of the more sophisticated attempts to conceptualize globalization, Appadurai (1990) writes that "the critical point is that both sides of the coin of global cultural process today are products of the infinitely varied mutual contest of sameness and difference on a stage characterised by radical disjunctures between different sorts of global flows and the uncertain landscapes created in and through these disjunctures" (308). Waters (1995) sheds further light on this approach when he notes that "a globalized culture is chaotic rather than orderly—it is integrated and connected so that the meanings of its components are 'relativized' to one another but it is not unified or centralized" (136). Thus, according to Waters (1995), "Globalization does not necessarily imply homogenization or integration" (136). It is characterized instead by cultural flows, which themselves may be multidirectional processes, by hybridization and creolization. To understand the relevance of these theories, however, it is useful to examine how they relate to real social practices and in this particular discussion to sport. This is not merely in order that the theories can be either endorsed or rejected but also to take into account the fact that sports sociologists and sport itself have themselves made important contributions to the general debate.

#### **GLOBALIZATION AND SPORT**

It has been argued that the organizational infrastructure for the globalization of sport has been in existence for some time. Jarvie and Maguire (1994) suggest that "dominant, emergent and residual patterns of sport and leisure practices are closely intertwined with globalization processes" (230). What this means, however, depends to a considerable degree on one's understanding of globalization in general. According to Houlihan (1994), "Globalisation, as related to sport, is . . . most evident and significant in providing governments with a further medium through which to conduct international politics" (200–201). Whether or not it also indicates a move in the direction of homogenization, however, is another matter. As Houlihan (1994) observes, "At the deeper level of facilitating the internalization of capitalist and consumerist values within local communities globalization is also successful, though it is extremely difficult to identify the extent to which sport has been a primary vehicle for propagation of these values" (201). Indeed, it can be argued that sports sociologists have been prominent in the struggle to ensure that the globalization process should not become identified with a relentless and irresistible surge toward total homogenization.

Maguire (1994), in particular, has added much to our understanding through his discussion on "diminishing contrasts" and "increasing vari-

eties." Adopting the more sophisticated view of globalization, Maguire argues that "global processes are multidirectional, involve a series of power balances, and have *neither* the hidden hand of progress *nor* some overarching conspiracy guiding them" (401). According to Maguire, "There is no *single* global flow" (402). As a consequence, "Competing and distinctive cultures are thus involved in an infinitely varied, mutual contest of *sameness* and *difference* across different figurational fields" (402). The result is neither cultural homogeneity nor chaotic cultural diversity. Rather, for Maguire, "In highlighting issues of homogeneity, and the mutual contest of sameness and difference in global cultural flows, the analysis can be developed with reference to the twin figurational concepts of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties" (402). According to Maguire (1999), "Globalization can therefore be understood in terms of attempts by more established groups to control and regulate access to global flows and also in terms of how indigenous peoples both resist these processes and recycle their own cultural products" (93). Holton (1998) arrives at a similar conclusion when he writes that "the global repertoire is not . . . to be seen as a consumer paradise or a life-enhancing intercultural smörgåsbord, but neither is it a demonic system of top-down system domination" (185). It is impossible to apply either homogenization or polarization or, indeed, hybridization with complete accuracy. Moreover, it is only when we begin to examine specific examples of contemporary social life that we can begin to fully appreciate the complexity of what is actually taking place.

For example, it is important to resist some of the implications of concepts such as "McDonaldization" and "Cocacolonization." Global processes have not created a universe in which everyone drinks Coca-Cola and eats Big Macs with increasingly fewer dietary alternatives on offer. It is true, of course, that these products are available in more parts of the world on an ever-increasing basis and this represents a clear example of the concept of diminishing contrasts. To suggest, however, that this represents the triumph of Americanization and the arrival of a homogeneous global culinary culture is surely nonsensical. The fact is that more and more foods are becoming accessible in even the remotest parts of the world. Few countries, at least in the developed world, offer only indigenous cuisine. Instead, they offer Big Macs but also menus inspired by the culinary traditions of a vast range of cultures. Indeed, even in the United States the idea of a nation eating nothing but burgers is an absurdity. In terms of food and drink, most of the world's citizens, including many even in the developing world, are offered greater variety than ever before. But to what extent does Maguire's analysis hold true for sport as well?

As Donnelly (1996) remarks, "The spread of cultural forms from one apparent source to many places has a long history" (243). There is a ques-

tion mark, however, as to whether this represents the product of cultural imperialism that spreads from dominant powers to subordinate satellites or alternatively a process of cultural exchange in which some countries may be more influential than others but none has total power (Tomlinson 1991). Sport emerges as a cultural form that can be exported and/or exchanged from the eighteenth century onward with Britain and its expanding empire playing a pivotal role. Not only countries in the British Empire itself but many others with which the British did business took up the various games, which were codified in the course of the British sporting revolution (Guttmann 1994). As some of the chapters in this book reveal, there was resistance to this tendency toward British sporting imperialism. In some countries, such as the United States, British games were transformed in such a way as to contribute to the development of unique sporting cultures. Elsewhere, and most notably in nationalist Ireland, a wholly alternative set of games were promoted, albeit in ways that continued to reveal the influence of the British approach to sport. In other situations, particularly within the empire, indigenous peoples took up the British games but sought to give them a distinctive flavor and, thereby, link them to broader anti-imperialist struggles. Good examples are provided by the enthusiasm for cricket in the Caribbean and the adoption of rugby union as a "national" game by South Africa's Afrikaners. Ironically, association football (soccer), which originated in its modern form in Britain but has become the truly universal game, has arguably spread more rapidly and with greater success in countries which were not part of the British Empire than in those that were.

Overall, the picture that emerges, and which shall be given more light and shade in the chapters that follow, is a confused one. Despite both Britain's historic role in the creation of modern sport and also the considerable political, economic, and cultural power of British imperialism, the introduction of British sports to the rest of the world was by no means a smooth and irresistible process. Rather, there emerged the pattern of cultural flows that are highlighted by more sophisticated applications of globalization theory, with distinctive identities flourishing within the overall context of global processes as opposed to being destroyed in a stampede toward global sporting homogeneity. Thus, we are witnessing something other than straightforward British cultural imperialism.

The question for contemporary sports sociologists, however, focuses on the degree to which more recent global trends can be legitimately described as Americanization, with the cultural influence travelling only in one direction. In fact, few have been able to claim with any degree of conviction that American culture has played a similar role in the world of sport to that which it might have played in the fields of popular music and cinema (or even food if one is inclined toward an acceptance of the

McDonaldization and Cocacolonization theses). Indeed, as Donnelly (1996) observes, "Americanisation is denied by pointing to the truly international basis of sports such as tennis, golf, cycling, soccer, and track and field; to the international sport spectacles such as the Olympics, Pan-American and Commonwealth Games, and World Championships; and to sports such as rugby, cricket, Australian Rules football, sumo wrestling, and the like that have little (if any) American participation while still being shown on ESPN and ABC's *Wide World of Sports*" (245). Moreover, it is evident that the export of American games to other parts of the world has been only partially successful, with basketball and volleyball doing particularly well throughout the world but baseball only truly establishing itself on certain Caribbean islands as well as in some of the countries of the Pacific Rim. American football has a worldwide following, thanks to the efforts of the global media, but attempts to introduce it as a professional sport in countries where soccer already has a strong hold on the sporting imagination have enjoyed only limited success. Of the other major North American team games, hockey is popular in a number of European countries—Sweden, Finland, the Czech Republic, Russia, and so on—but this has more to do with the game's suitability in the first instance to native conditions than with the potency of American cultural imperialism. In any case, Canadians would be quick to point out that hockey is their game and not that of the United States and there is no one yet who has sought to equate the processes known as globalization with something called Canadianization. There is little evidence, therefore, that the Americans have gone anywhere near to achieving the success of the British in terms of the actual export of games. Indeed, one major obstacle they have faced in this regard is the fact that most countries had already established a sporting culture, which owed much to British influence, long before the United States became a dominant world power.

On the other hand, it can be argued that American ideas have impacted upon the organization and packaging of sports throughout the world regardless of whether or not the sports themselves have any significant American input. Rule changes often bear the stamp of American practices. Squad numbers and the addition of players' names mean that the shirts of Premiership soccer players in England increasingly resemble those worn in the National Hockey League (NHL), the National Football League (NFL), and the National Basketball Association (NBA). Rugby League clubs, initially in Australia and New Zealand but thereafter in England, were given names resembling those of American franchises—Sharks, Warriors, etc. Stadia throughout the world begin to look more and more like those that play host to top American sports teams. The graphics on scoreboards look increasingly American as does media cov-

erage of non-American as well as American games in other parts of the world. For some, all of these developments might be regarded as evidence of the Americanization of sport, more subtle but no less powerful than would be signified by the successful transplantation of specific sports. It is doubtful, however, that this reflects the existence of a process called Americanization as opposed to the evolution of capitalism and its implications for the entire leisure industry.

It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that most sports sociologists have been reluctant to endorse the Americanization thesis and even those who have chosen this general approach have tended to modify it to suit particular needs (Donnelly 1996). Some, for example, have chosen to refer to the Europeanization of sport. Thus, Standeven (1994) considers the possibility that "physical education, of which games are an important element within a fully developed education for leisure in the new Europe, may achieve again the influence it had a century ago within the public schools and colonial cultures of Britain" (241). Yet, even in this appraisal, there is a confidence that sport will continue to "ennoble cultural differences." This does not mean, however, that globalization, even in its more sophisticated form, must be discarded. In fact, if we take the concept to imply a process of cultural exchange that includes both "diminishing contrasts" and "increasing varieties," then sport is revealed as being global in much the same way as cuisine. Thus, we package our own games in American ways. Meanwhile, the Americans play our games whether these be martial arts imported from Japan (and given an American twist) or soccer, played originally in the United States by first-generation European immigrants but now one of the fastest growing American pastimes among people whose family links with the world's major soccer playing nations are increasingly distant.

It is pointless to deny the reality of time-space compression. The world has become a smaller place and cultural forms increasingly reflect this. Young people from New York to Tokyo and from Reykyavik to Cape Town listen to the same music. They drink the same soft drinks. They dress the same way in clothes derived from the world of sport, created by the major manufacturers of sportswear and often bearing the name of an internationally renowned athlete, most notably Michael Jordan. The products themselves originate in multinational corporations, most of which are based in the United States, but are manufactured in different parts of the world. Thus, in many respects, these youngsters are proof that there is such a phenomenon as globalization. But it would be meaningless to seek to equate totally the life of a young American with that of a Japanese contemporary or the experiences of a teenager in South Africa with those of an Icelandic youngster. To understand the world of each of these young people, it is necessary to take into account the local condi-

tions under which they live as opposed to merely drawing conclusions from what is ultimately superficial. Huge differences persist in the ways in which people live their lives and one of the major sources of these differences is national identity.

#### **NATIONALISM: RESISTANCE TO GLOBALIZATION AND SPORT**

According to Smith (1995), "Politics and cultures have characteristics and patterns of their own, which are quite different from those of economic systems" (28). "Nowhere," he continues, "is this more evident than in the sphere of nations and nationalisms" (28). Arguably Smith's comments are primarily relevant only to relatively unsophisticated interpretations of globalization. Maguire's notion of "diminishing contrasts" and "increasing varieties," for example, is not necessarily contradicted by the prevalence of ethnic and nationalist rivalry. But Smith is surely correct to make the point that, however nationalism emerged, it actually means something to large numbers of people. Perhaps it is more artificial than natural. Certainly it relies to a considerable degree on myths. This is Anderson's "imagined community." But it touches people's hearts and minds in ways that cosmopolitanism does not and may never be able to, regardless of the development of global economics, power structures, and cultural forms. As Smith (1995) expresses it, "A timeless global culture answers to no living needs and conjures no memories" (24). The nation-state may well be in crisis (Dunn 1994), yet it remains the globally recognized structure of political organization: hence the United *Nations* not the Assembly of the Planet Earth's Population. In any case, if it is facing a crisis, the nation-state is threatened at least as much, if not more, by alternative expressions of nationalism as by globalization. Ultimately, as Smith (1995) suggests, "National identity, as opposed to other kinds of collective identity, is pre-eminently functional for modernity, being suited to the needs of a wide variety of social groups and individuals in the modern epoch" (155). Indeed, even the nation-state as opposed to nationalism in general is better prepared to resist the pressures of global transformation than some commentators would have us believe (Holton 1998). All in all, then, nationalism's death, like that of Mark Twain, has been greatly exaggerated. As Kamenka (1993) notes, "For at least one hundred years now, the death of nationalism has been predicted by good people confidently—and erroneously" (78). In the face of a variety of theses, nationalisms flourish. Furthermore, national identities, at their best, make the world a more interesting and joyous place.

As Miller (1995) observes, "National identities can remain unarticulated, yet still exercise a pervasive influence on people's behaviour" (27). For example, sports fans may dress in national costumes and paint their



faces in national colors without being remotely attracted to nationalist politics. In such ways, however, sport does provide us with an important arena in which to celebrate national identities. It also forces us at times to consider the precise nature of our own national identity. It provides opportunities for representatives of different nations to engage with each other in honest competition and for their fans to enter into the world of carnival. It is also disfigured at times by the darker side of nationalism. Competitors cheat and are often officially encouraged to do so in order to promote the athletic prowess of the nation. Fans riot in some strange attempt to conduct war by other means. Benign or aggressive, the relationship between sport and nationalism is, nevertheless, inescapable. Indeed, as Kellas (1991) asserts, "The most popular form of nationalist behaviour in many countries is in sport, where masses of people become highly emotional in support of their national team" (21).

Except in times of war, seldom is the communion between members of the nation, who might otherwise be classed as total strangers, as strongly felt as during major international events. There is nothing great or glorious about writing one's nationality in a hotel register. Moreover, the action itself is essentially solitary and thus fails to bring one together with one's compatriots except in an abstract sense. But sporting events unite members of the nation in highly emotional circumstances. As Jarvie (1993) expresses it, "It is as if the imagined community or nation becomes more real on the terraces or the athletics tracks" (75). As the athletes compete and their compatriots support their efforts, there exists a bond that can often only be understood with reference to the concept of nationality. "Sport," writes Jarvie, "often provides a uniquely effective medium for inculcating national feelings; it provides a form of symbolic action which states the case for the nation itself" (74). Sport can also help to ensure the persistence of multiple national identities within the same political formation. In South Africa, for example, it has long been possible to differentiate between white and urban black sporting identities, which have fed into rival constructions of what it has meant to be South African. Furthermore, these are two among many identities that have contributed to the slow emergence of a sportive nationalism appropriate to the new "rainbow nation" (Nauright 1997). But what does all of this actually tell us about national identity or sport or even the interplay between the two? Is it possible even at this early stage of our investigation to speak of a phenomenon called sporting nationalism?

#### **SPORTING NATIONALISM**

According to Hoberman (1993), "Sportive nationalism is not a single generic phenomenon; on the contrary, it is a complicated sociopolitical

response to challenges and events, both sportive and non-sportive, that must be understood in terms of the varying national contexts in which it appears" (18). Hoberman himself tends to focus on the nationalism that is associated with "the high performance ideal and any techniques that might serve it" (315). Essentially, this means what political theorists would describe as "official nationalism" (Kellas 1991, 4). Existing nation-states have frequently been shown to use sport for a variety of purposes, including enhancing prestige, securing legitimacy, compensating for other aspects of life within their boundaries, and pursuing international rivalries by peaceful means (Hargreaves 1992).

This type of sporting nationalism has received considerable attention (Hill 1992; Houlihan 1994; Illmarinen 1982), but the resultant debate has tended to ignore the question of national identity and its complex relationship with official nationalisms. Thus, it has little to say, for example, about ethnic nationalism which is as likely to pose a threat to the existing political order as to provide the basis for its maintenance. This study does not deny the useful role played by sport in aiding and abetting state sponsored nationalism. But, sport also has the capacity to help to undermine official nationalism by linking itself to sub-nation-state national identities and providing a vehicle for the expression of alternative visions of the nation (Cronin and Mayall 1998; MacClancy 1996; Mangan 1996). For example, as Kidd (1992) observes about Canada, one of the countries that is examined in this book, "the Canadian unity celebrated by the triumph of Team Canada in international ice hockey helps reinforce the hegemony of English-speaking, central Canadian patriarchy, and the legitimacy of high performance as the ultimate measure of cultural validity in sport" (153). On other occasions, however, "the ideology of dominant meanings is contested as such" and "while cultural struggle has occurred at every Olympic Games, it was particularly acute at the time of the Montreal Games [1976], when the very definition of the host nation and the purpose of sports—both of which frame the staging and interpretation of an Olympics—were openly and fiercely debated" (153). Seldom is the linkage of sport and national identity straightforward and it is only by looking at particular nationalities that its nuances are revealed. In addition, by examining the complexities of this issue, it becomes possible to establish a more accurate theoretical conceptualization of the relationship between sport and national identity. One approach to these issues, for example, is to try to understand what is meant when people refer to their "national" sport.

It is true that sports fans of any nation will delight in the sporting success of their compatriots. But sporting nationalism is also linked to the sport in which that success has been obtained. Thus, the depth of celebra-

tion may still vary from one sport to another and the sport (or sports) that attracts most widespread attention will commonly be linked to the idea of a national sport. One criterion of a national sport might be that the sport in question was actually invented in a particular nation. It may have remained exclusive to its place of origin although it is more likely that it is played in other countries but retains its cultural link to the parent nation. However, a national sport may also be one with which a particular nation and its people identify strongly even though it is played in many other parts of the world, including countries that have been seen as enemies and may still be conceived of in this way. The sport may also be regarded as national inasmuch as the people of a particular nation have influenced its development in a certain fashion or play in a unique way. The question of what constitutes a national sport will be addressed in the chapters that follow. But this is only a part of the overall objective of this study.

Ultimately, the book explores two related themes—the extent to which sport has been implicated in the development of particular national identities and the ways in which sporting nationalisms have responded to the forces of globalization. The nations or nationalities that have been chosen for examination were not selected on any scientific basis but largely because of their own intrinsic interest together with the author's knowledge of them. That said, they do offer a range of different nationalist experiences out of which, it is hoped, some valuable theoretical conclusions can be drawn. Despite their differences, however, all of the nationalisms that are examined in the book are located in Western societies either in Europe or North America. It is there that the modern idea of nationalism first emerged. In addition, given the supposed relationship between material progress and globalization, it is in these developed societies of the West that one might expect to see the clearest evidence of cultural convergence. As a result, they are good places in which to conduct a study not only of links between sport and national identity but also the impact of global change.

Some of the discussion that follows deals with the idea of official nationalism. More often, however, what is revealed is the degree to which below the superficial veneer, in most social formations the relationship between sport and nationality remains contested terrain. In some cases, this refers to the existence of more than one national identity within the same nation-state. Or it could be a matter of a specific national identity being shared between two different political entities. Then again, it may simply mean that there are divisions concerning how the nation is understood and presented—in this particular instance, by way of sport. For many people, none of this really matters. They remain oblivious to the excitement of sport or disinterested in the idea of the nation or, in more

extreme cases, equally hostile to sport and nationhood. But for at least as large a group, in every corner of the world, both sport and nationality matter as, indeed, does the relationship between the two. It is the precise nature of that relationship that forms the main subject matter of this study.