6 – Members’ Forum

In this new category of our bulletin we want to offer all ISHPES members the possibility to publish short papers of their recent work and information of general interest for our readers. They should have between 500 and 2500 words, the references should be in APA format and pictures, graphs or tables are welcome. If you want to make use of this new Forum, please send your paper to sandra.heck@rub.de with your name, title and affiliation. The authors are responsible for the quality of their article. For information on publication please email the author.

Sport History Going Dutch

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The history of Dutch sport history in academia has neither been longstanding nor consistent. Although an important and distinctive sociological line of research can be discerned as well as a number of interesting separate historical studies, no coherent historical research programs have come up so far that aim at integrating sport as a systematic category of broader historical analysis.

In 2014, however, a program has started at the History Department of Radboud University in Nijmegen that studies sport history from a broad cultural historical perspective. The research project ‘Sport, Identity and Modernity in the Netherlands, 1813-2013’ concentrates on discourses and practices of sport and physical culture within the context of processes of both national and individual identity making throughout the second half of the 19th and the 20th century. Although basically foreign inventions, sport and physical culture were appropriated and underwent processes of Dutchification. The project’s central questions addresses these appropriations, its discursive practices, what social groups were susceptible to it, what kind of ideological and cultural resistance they met, and particularly what new lifestyles and identities were produced that lead to sport as a new identity marker within Dutch society. Five historians analyze these questions from different angles. Jan Luitzen (PhD) focuses on the appropriation of modern English sports (rounders, hockey, cricket, football and tennis) through the boys’ institute of Noorthey, 1800-1886. Jelle Zondag MA (PhD) focuses on the intertwining of the discourse on resilience and sport on the one hand and the accompanying educational, medical, national, militaristic, imperialistic and Darwinist assumptions on the other between 1890-1940. Aad Haverkamp MA (PhD) studies the chronological development of sport biographies in the 20th century as a source for analyzing changing cultural discourses on athletes. Jan Rijpstra (PhD) looks at the way in which sport has been used as an instrument of soft power and representation by the Dutch royalty. Finally, Dr. Marjet Derks, who is both the initiator and supervisor of the project, looks at the way in which the sporting body became the embodiment of progress, vitality and identity and was both countered and appropriated by religious and ideological ‘pillars’. Together, these projects hope to clarify both national and transnational identity markers that sport and physical culture produced within larger processes within Dutch society. The researchers all look forward to sharing their research with ISPHES-historians at meetings and conferences.

For more information: http://www.ru.nl/geschiedenis/onderzoek/culturele/sport-history-as