

## THE SOCIAL BASES FOR EXCLUSION OF SPORT FROM CARIBBEAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: IDENTITY FORMATION VS CAPITAL ACCUMULATION

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### I. INTRODUCTION

One of the salient developments of the 20th century, particularly its last two decades, was the increasing commercialisation of sport and its transformation into an important pole of capital accumulation and economic development consistent with the expansionist dynamics of capitalism on an international scale. This development however did not take place over night and has not taken place at the same pace and to the same degree either across the world or across all sports. In the main, it has found greatest expression in some of the more industrialized countries in Europe and North America, and to a lesser extent in Asia (e.g., Japan), and Latin America (e.g., Brazil, Argentina, Mexico). However, in most parts of the world, particularly the developing world, neither the commercialisation of sport, nor its study, figure prominently in the discourse on economic development and transformation. The Commonwealth Caribbean also referred to as the Anglophone Caribbean, the West Indies or just the Caribbean and more so, the countries that constitute the bulk of the regional grouping called CARICOM, can be considered one of these developing areas. The major aim of this paper is to examine some of the principal reasons for the general exclusion of sport from notions of economic development which, it is argued, stems principally from the dominant conception of sport as a source of identity formation, conceived narrowly in terms of socio-political symbolism, as opposed to capital accumulation. Consistent with this objective, the paper is divided into six major parts which examine (i) the historical origins and development of sport as a source of identity formation in pre-industrial and traditional society; (ii) the role of industrialization and the British in the development of modern sport as a source of wealth and socio-political identity; (iii) the contemporary sport industry; (iv) the orthodox and dominant conception of economy and economic development in the Caribbean; (v) the socio-political role of sport and the athlete in the Caribbean and (vi) the requirements for change

or the way forward if sport is to become a significant industry in the Caribbean Single Market and Economy and aid in the process of socio-economic transformation.

## II. IDENTITY FORMATION AND THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF SPORT

The notion of identity formation is broadly defined here as a process by which people try to (re) define who they are as individuals or as members of particular groups, be it class, race, religion or gender, as well as communities, nations and regions. Identity formation is not only multi-dimensional in nature but can be shaped by or be the outcome of particular social, economic or political processes working either singularly or in combination at particular junctures of history and development. In addition, this multifaceted process may also be characterized by various forms of contestation, antagonism, tension and struggle among its constituent elements which serve to shape its general contours, dynamic and trajectory. As regards the notion of capital accumulation, this is defined here as referring specifically to the economic process of generating material wealth on the part of individuals and collectivities. While capital accumulation can surely influence identity formation, and vice versa, one can see it as a distinct or separate albeit related part of that process. When we use the term identity formation in the context of this essay on sport, we refer particularly to the socio-political meanings through which sport has been constructed and framed as a social activity.

Historically, and universally, the development of sport has been enmeshed in this variegated process of identity formation which was conditioned by the structure, culture and particular stage of development of the society where it was practiced. In this light, it should not be surprising to note that in pre-industrial and traditional societies, one of the major functions served by sport was a sacred or religious one given the dominant role assumed by religion in these societies. In these early societies, the staging of and involvement in games formed part of rituals to pay homage to their Gods and to request favours be it in relation to female and agricultural fertility, sickness, producing rain or prolonging life (Guttman 1978: 16-20). For instance, in relation to the traditional ball games of the Mayans and Aztecs, it has been noted that "Every tennis court was a temple." (ibid., 20). And, in ancient Greece, the crown games as they were called, were religious festivals held every 2 to 4 years to pay homage to various Gods. These included: the Pythian and Nemean games in honour of the God Apollo, the Isthmian Games held in honour of the God Poseidon and the Olympic games held in honour of the God Zeus (ibid., 21). The games were called the "crown games" because the winners were literally

crowned with olive, bay, pine or parsley wreaths. Additionally, apart from this religious function, games also assumed secular purposes, notably as sources of preparation for war as well as achieving social recognition and mobility through the granting of material and non-material rewards to victors. Among the ancient Greeks for instance, it has been noted that “Cities glorified in the athletic victories of their citizens, rewarded the victors materially with large pensions and other benefits, honored them in legend, in the form of statues, and in some of the greatest poetry even written ...” (ibid., 23).

Linked to its secular and military function to prepare soldiers for war, violence was also a common feature of sports in ancient Greece and Rome as well as in medieval and modern Europe (Cashmore 2000; Dunning 1999; Vamplew 1988) although it appeared to have been more developed among the Romans as evidenced in the cult of the gladiator. In this cult gladiators fought each other and animals to the death and delight of Roman rulers and people (Guttmann 1978; Cashmore 2000). Writing for 18th century Britain, Vamplew (1988: 27) also notes that “in many sports the ultimate objective was to physically injure an opponent.” Early sport in traditional society therefore formed an important component of communal identity or identity formation built around religion, political warfare, violence and social status. The early role of sport in the process of identity formation and capital accumulation, however, was to develop further with the advance of industrialization, democracy and the general thrust of modernization in the 18th and 19th centuries in which the British figured prominently due to their role as an imperial power.

### III. SPORT, INDUSTRIALIZATION AND THE BRITISH

The 18th and 19th centuries marked a veritable turning point in the structural transformation of sport and its constitution and consolidation as a source of identity and capital formation through the combined influences of democratization, industrialization, British colonization and imperialism. The structural transformation of sport during these periods, which has been referred to as sportization (Elias 1939/2000; Dunning 1999), was marked by several major related processes: codification (the formulation of formal rules to govern sport participation); bureaucratization (the establishment of formal organizations such as clubs, national and international sport associations); standardization (the establishment of uniform measures for playing surfaces, equipment, balls, bats, discuss, javelin, size of teams etc.); quantification (preoccupation with measuring performances and records), democratization (concern over fairness and equality) and commercialization (Guttmann 1978). The British have been generally seen as playing

the major role in these structural transformations in modern sport and facilitating its global diffusion through the conduit of its vast Empire that spanned Asia, Africa and the Americas.<sup>1</sup> As a result of this, the following discussion will tend to focus particularly on British society since this is fundamental to understanding the development of sport in its former Caribbean possessions.

As part of its structural transformation during 18th and 19th century Britain, sport was to assume greater socio-political and economic value to the British. The socio-political value of sport expanded through the development of elitist notions of amateurism, the amateur-gentleman, the games ethos, and its association with the British nation, British national identity, British civilization and the British Empire. It was during this time that cricket ascended the imperial sporting throne as the quintessential symbol of Englishness and Empire. During the Victorian era, it became part of the awesome foursome: “Civilization, Christianity, Classics and Cricket” (Sandiford 1994: 2). In fact, sport on the whole became an important ideological component and instrument of British colonization, imperialist control and its supposed civilizing mission to turn heathens and savages into good Christian souls and so rescue them from a life of barbarism and backwardness (Mangan 1998; Sandiford 1983). A critical institutional mechanism that had facilitated the structural transformation of sport and its consolidation or construction as a source of class and national identity in 19th century Britain was the ‘public school’.

The British public school, which developed during the second half of the 19th century to educate and refine children of the elites, had three major related aims: (a) to produce gentlemen of good character; (b) to develop leaders for the British Empire and British society itself and (c) to develop compliance among people, particularly subordinate groups, both within Britain and its Empire as a whole through the values it espoused (e.g., discipline, loyalty etc.). Sport became a major agency for the pursuit of these aims through the development of what was variously called the ‘games ethos’, the ‘games ethic’, and ‘the ideology of athleticism’. The ‘games ethos’ dished out by the British public school was meant to inculcate notions of courage, endurance, stoicism, collectivism (e.g., team, nation), loyalty and patriotism, and it was through the public schools that the association of sport with the development of good character was formally expressed and developed (Dunning 1972; Hargreaves 1986; Mangan 1998, 2000, 2006).

The games ethos was also fed into and expressed in the concept of amateurism, the amateur code or the amateur-gentleman. This latter notion did not just refer to the absence of the monetary motive in sport

participation, but also symbolized a set of vaunted moral virtues which included such notions as fair play, obedience or respect for authority (e.g., the decision of the referee or umpire is final), discipline and loyalty which were all geared to the creation of 'gentlemen', hence the term, 'the amateur-gentleman' (McCree 2000: 200; Holt 1989:98). Amateurism became the swansong of the new and rising middle classes who presented it as the ideal and only way to participate in sport as part of a new found opposition to the consolidation of professional sport during the second half of the 19th century. However, it has been shown that the development of this notion of amateurism and its promotion as the proper or ideal approach to sport participation emerged as a peculiar middle class oppositional response to the consolidation of professional sport during the second half of the 19th century, in a period marked by profound changes and tension in the British class structure brought on in part by the process of industrialization. These changes had resulted in the sudden growth of the middle classes made up largely of professionals, merchants and industrialists (Holt 1989: 110-114; Dunning 1999). However, before the emergence of amateurism as a peculiar ideological or class construct, and even before the onset of industrialization, gambling and monetary prizes were known to have long existed in British sport, particularly in such sports as prize fighting, horseracing, cockfighting, pedestrianism, cricket and even swimming in which members of both the common and elite classes participated (Hargreaves 1986, Vamplew 1988; Terret 1995). In addition, in certain sports such as swimming and cricket, professionals and amateurs were even known to have played side by side without any antagonism or tension (Terret 1995: 26; Dunning 1999: 116-118). Writing on the origins of the amateur-professional cleavage and the historical pecuniary practices in English sport in particular relation to the sport of cricket, Holt (1989: 103) noted:

The term 'professional' came into use in the 1850s and 'amateur' in the 1880s. Before the mid-nineteenth century the terms 'gentlemen' and 'players' were used mainly in cricket to denote those who were of independent means and those who were not. The distinction was purely one of social position and there was no dishonor attached to making money out of sport. Noblemen like the Duke of Richmond staked large sums on cricket matches in the eighteenth century, and the Revd. Lord Frederick Beauclerk was thought to make around £600 a year from cricket, though 'it was widely suspected that he owed a great deal of his financial success to backing his opponents in games in which he himself was playing'. This well-established tradition clashed with the new amateur ethic which saw sport as a moral end in itself rather than as a source of enrichment.

Professional sport with its encouragement of gambling, corruption, individualism, winning, seemingly posed a threat to 'fair play', and the

general ascetic ideals of the games ethos or the amateur-gentleman (*ibid.*, 103-104). Consequently, the elite classes not only in Britain, but also in Canada (Gruneau 1983/1999) and the USA (Ingham 1978; Pope 1996), who controlled the organization of sport, reacted negatively to professional sport, through attempts either to ban or discourage it, because they saw it as a direct threat to the new amateur ethos which they upheld, and the class distinctions which underpinned it. This early struggle between the adherents of amateur and professional sport can be seen as the expression of a deeper conflict between two competing sporting world views: one that saw sport primarily in terms of identity formation which meant here a particular type of class identity or social status and the other that saw it equally as a source of generating material wealth through professionalization and commercialization or, in short, capital accumulation. However, it is instructive to note that while there was opposition among the ideologues of amateurism to professional sport, similar opposition was not expressed to the manufacture of sport goods and equipment or the use of sport by businessmen, sponsors and the media to promote or sell their products and services which, ironically, not only aided the development of professional sport, but now form the kernel of the contemporary sport industry.

#### IV. CONTEMPORARY SPORT INDUSTRY

While the commodification of sport or the use of sport to generate wealth had begun to expand and accelerate in the second half of the 19th century through the process of industrialization and professionalization, it was during the second half of the 20th century and moreso the final quarter, which saw the virtual explosion of this process, conditioned again by the workings of a capitalist economy and the expansion of capitalism globally. And so much so that today, it is valid to speak of a sport industry, which has several major related dimensions covering manufacturing, tourism, media coverage, services (e.g., management, medicine, psychology), gambling, education (e.g., teaching and research in sport), professional competition, and sponsorship, which offer a wide range of careers outside the traditionally narrow ones of coach and player/athlete. (see Box 1). While these different dimensions of the sport industry can be analytically distinct, they are in fact intimately connected and feed off each other. As regards the value of this industry, the figures are staggering. For instance, in the USA one source estimated the annual value of the US sport industry at US\$213 billion in 2006 (<http://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com>) while another has given an estimate of US\$390 billion for the same year (<http://www.plunkettresearch.com>). In addition, the US sport industry is

estimated to be “more than twice the size of the US auto industry and seven times the movie industry”. (<http://www.sportbusinessjournal.com>). In Asia, the sport industry has also taken off being valued at US\$10billion in Korea in 2000 and US\$52.8 billion in Japan ((Kim 2000, cited in Cheng n.d.: 3). In 2005, research commissioned by the World Federation of Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI) estimated the value of the global sport market at \$235 billion (<http://www.wfsgi.org>), while the entire sport industry was valued at US\$500 billion globally in 1999 (<http://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com>). In the UK the value of the sport industry was estimated at 15.2bn in 2000 (<http://www.researchandmarkets.com>).

### **Box 1. Contemporary Sport Industry**

<b>1. Manufacturing</b>	<b>6. Media Coverage</b>
-clothing	-Press, radio, TV, pay per view, internet
-footwear	-Live/delayed
-equipment	-Video/DVD
(e.g., balls, bats, stumps, racquets, helmets)	
-ticketing	
<b>2. Sport tourism</b>	
<b>3. Professionalization</b>	<b>7. Sponsorship</b>
-Clubs/teams	-Individuals
-Leagues	-Teams
-Tournaments	-Events
-Merchandising	
-Product endorsement	
<b>4. Gambling</b>	<b>8. Services/Careers</b>
-Terrestrial	-Management
-Cyberspace/Internet	-Sport medicine
	-Physiotherapy
<b>5. Education/Sport Studies</b>	-Psychology
-Teaching (University)	-Biomechanics
-Research/Consultancy	-Leisure centres/gyms
-Publication	-Sport agents

Three of the major dimensions of the sport industry that have facilitated the commercialization of sport relate to gambling, the media and sponsorship. In relation to gambling, figures up to 2004, reveal that for Britain, expenditure on (legal) gambling has been valued around 7 to 8 billion pounds annually, while the corresponding figure for the USA is US\$50billion (Morris 2004: 433, 439). With respect to the media, the

television in particular, and more recently the internet, have played a very important role in the massification, globalization and commercialization of sport through its effects on viewership, sport sponsorship and the cost of media rights to broadcast particular sporting competition (Rowe 1999; Coakley 2007). For example, in the latter respect, whereas the cost of television rights for the 1960 Rome Olympics was US\$350,000, by the 2004 Greece Olympics the figure had risen to US\$793m and for the 2008 Beijing Olympics it has risen even further to US\$894m (Seifart 1984; Rowe 1999; Coakley 2007). A similar monumental increase was evident in the World Cup of football where the value of television rights moved from US\$23 million in Spain 1982 to US\$910 million in Germany 2006 (Solberg 2004). Concomitant with the increase in the value of broadcast rights, we have also witnessed a phenomenal growth in televised viewership of sporting events. For instance an estimated 3.7 billion people across 220 countries watched the entire 2004 Olympic Games in Greece (Coakley, 2007: 415) while 5 billion were projected to view the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany (<http://www.mediaguardian.co.uk>). Because of the large viewership that some sports and sporting events command, it should not be surprising to find that the value of sport sponsorship has also soared, so much so that up to 2002, the global value of sport sponsorship was put at 15.7 billion pounds, which represented “an increase of 12.6 billion in the last ten years” (Thaites and Chadwick 2004: 352). And, of the total 2002 figure, North America accounted for 40% while Europe accounted for 33% (ibid.).

However, as with everything else, the use of sport to generate wealth or stimulate economic growth has found its greatest expression in some of the advanced industrialized countries in North America and Europe. Therefore, like the development of professionalization itself, the development of sport as an industry has not only varied in scope and intensity across the globe, but in some regions either it has not really developed at all or is still struggling to do so, which is particularly the case in lesser developed countries like those of the Caribbean where orthodox ideas still undermine this process.

## V. ECONOMY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SPORT IN THE CARIBBEAN

The post-Columbian Caribbean developed largely as an outpost of Europe as it became a source not just for the export of European products



but also its ideas, culture and institutions. And sport, as we noted previously, was one of those important institutions or cultural practices that was integral to British imperialist expansion in particular. Influenced by the British colonial inheritance therefore, which had emphasized the value of sport as a source of socio-political identity, sport has never been seen as an integral part of Caribbean economic development or capital accumulation either before or after independence from Great Britain in the second half of the 20th century. This situation, however, has been significantly influenced not only by the received or orthodox view of sport but by the conceptions of athletes, the economy and economic development.

In the Caribbean, economy and economic development has been historically equated with several major activities or sectors such as mineral extraction (e.g., oil, gas, bauxite), agriculture (e.g., banana, sugar, citrus), tourism and manufacturing (this excluded sport equipment). While in some islands, there is a mix of mineral extraction, agriculture, tourism and manufacturing, in most, it is the case that the lifeblood of the economy is centred around one or two of these industries. Thinking, planning or policy formulation on economic development in the Caribbean therefore at all levels, be it the state, the traditional private sector, academia, trade unions, never included sport or popular culture as a whole. It should not be surprising thus that theorizing on Caribbean economic development be it in terms of modernization, world system, dependency, Marxist, or plantation theories never considered sport and popular culture as part of that economic process (see Girvan 1971; Beckford 1972; Witter and Beckford 1980; Frank 1967, 1971; Wallerstein 1974). The renowned Caribbean scholar Lloyd Best, who has written at length on the nature of the plantation economy in the Caribbean and how it has been modified or not modified over time to suit the peculiar needs of the global capitalist order (Best et al 1968), has never really modified his thinking on sport in such a way as to make it an integral part of the process of theorizing and economic development. So, for all his radical posturing and advocate of 'independent thought and action' Best, like others of his ilk and generation remain trapped in developmental orthodoxy which, by its nature, preempts the very thought and action they have historically advocated (Best 1971). As a result of this situation, while the present day West Indian cricket team has been perniciously pilloried for their decline in recent years (Beckles 1998), there has been no commensurate criticism of the fact that the region cannot even manufacture a cricket ball or any other goods and equipment which form part of the cricket sport industry.<sup>2</sup> This has further served to reinforce our historical dependence and underdevelopment as well as undermine

cricket's supposed function as a symbol of West Indian independence and resistance.

In spite of the dominant thinking and orthodoxy surrounding economy and sport, however, there have still been several historical attempts at commercializing sport in the Caribbean on the part of private individuals through namely, the introduction of professional sports and sport gambling. Most of these efforts, however, have been restricted to certain islands, certain sports and not particularly successful or sustainable. In Jamaica, for instance, professional cycling reportedly existed in the 1930s and 1940s (Port of Spain Gazette, August 14 1945; Trinidad Guardian, January 13 1946) and professional football was also attempted there sometime in the 1980s, but these developments are yet to be researched and studied. In Trinidad and Tobago, research by this author has shown that there were several efforts to professionalize football between 1969 and 1983 but these failed due to a combination of factors that included poor financing and organizational conflict. In the latter regard, the various efforts were met with strong resistance from the governing football body which had seen these developments as a threat to its power and control over the game locally (Mc Cree 1995, 2000). In 1995, professional football was again introduced to Trinidad and Tobago in the form of a semi-professional league, which became fully professional in 1999 (Trinidad Express, March 29 1999; <http://www.ttproleague.com>). Since that time therefore, there has been a professional football league operating in this country, but the league still suffers from serious problems which include very poor public attendance, poor media coverage, low salaries and incentives linked to financing limitations (Trinidad Guardian, March 5 2003). The league operates more or less oblivious to the public at large. As a consequence, players continue to leave for better opportunities abroad in Europe and the USA (Trinidad Guardian, January 4 2007; Newsday, January 4 2007). In addition to professional football, in Trinidad and Tobago, in the late 1940s and 1950s it has been found that there existed at one time an organized betting pool based on the major local football leagues (Trinidad Guardian, September 3 1949; Trinidad Guardian, January 6 1950; Trinidad Guardian, July 26 1951; Trinidad Guardian, July 26 1952)), but more research is still to be done to ascertain the specific structure and workings of this practice. Apart from cycling and football, the sports of boxing and horseracing have also been organized along commercial lines in the Caribbean. In boxing however, apart from sporadic professional fights, there exists no real professional circuit. And, while horseracing is more commercially developed and supported by a thriving gambling culture, it is restricted mainly to the islands of Jamaica, Barbados

and Trinidad and Tobago. Sadly, scholarly work is also lacking on the economic value and potential of these sports.

The critical reason(s) for the general exclusion of sport from the notions of economy and economic development in the Caribbean, however, have to do not only with the conception of economy and economic development per se, but with the very conception of sport and the role it was assigned in the broader process of social development and transformation. That role has been scripted principally around its socio-political value as a source of morale virtues and the political self-affirmation of Caribbean peoples, which speaks in short, to identity formation.

## **VI. ROLE OF SPORT AND ATHLETES IN CARIBBEAN**

Coming out of the encounter with Europe through the experience with over 300 years of mainly British imperialism, the conception and development of sport in the Caribbean was invariably determined by British derived notions of sport and their accompanying contradictions and constraints. In this regard, it can be said that the approach to sport in the Anglophone Caribbean was founded on the British 'public school model' (PSM) (James 1963; Sandiford 1983, 1994). Sandiford (1994: 5-6) noted as much when he wrote that: "Elite colonial schools were erected as far as humanly possible on the model of Eton, Harrow, Rugby and Winchester. Curricula were slavishly borrowed form [sic] these public schools and the majority of teachers were imported from Britain." The PSM represented the major ideological and institutional component in the articulation of sport as a source of identity formation and contained ideas that equated easily with the functionalist sociological perspective given the stress on its consensual, harmonizing, integrative and normalizing function. In this regard for instance, the approach to sport within the education system and the society at large centered around its normative value or role as a source of (i) moralism or character formation; (ii) recreation; (iii) health; (iv) unity/harmony/integration/order and (v) nationalism/nation building. It is ironic however, that notwithstanding its functionalist construction, sport and moreso the English game of cricket, also came to symbolize resistance to British imperialism as it became incorporated into the processes of West Indian nationalism, regionalism and decolonization (James 1963; Manley 1988; Beckles 1998). From its inception thus, sport in the Caribbean was not located in the economy or the process of capital accumulation but in the polity and civil society as a means by which either consensus was fabricated or resistance articulated. The legendary West Indian thinker CLR James has done more than any other to illustrate and reinforce the

socio-political value of sport in the Caribbean through his canonical text, *Beyond a Boundary*, which has assumed biblical status in examining the genesis and development of West Indian cricket and society.

Within the formal education system, sport was conceived under the rubric of 'extra-curricula activity' and 'physical education' which were themselves shaped by functionalist ideas. However, the ideological and pedagogical value of 'extra-curricula activity' and 'physical education' within the education system rested not only on their morale or normalizing functions but on their supposed role in the learning process as expressed in the clichés, 'all work and no play makes jack a dull boy' and the oft repeated proverb *mens sana incorpore sano* (a sound mind in a healthy body). In this conception thus, sport was directly associated with intelligence or performing well in school and was seen as largely complementary to the intellect. However, while this view prevailed, there was always the opposite view or suspicion that those who were talented in 'extra-curricula activities', particularly sport, were generally not academically inclined or intelligent. And, as an extension of this, it was believed further that any such talent that they had served primarily to compensate for their intellectual deficiencies. In this sense sport participation was largely seen as compensatory. Almost by definition then, an athlete was someone who was considered intellectually challenged. At one and the same time therefore, sport was associated with and not associated with intelligence. No less a person than Lloyd Best, Oxford educated member of the Afro-Saxon middle class and intellectual cadre, symbolizes this snobbish, British derived thinking when, in relation to Trinidad and Tobago, he wrote in 2000 that "The entrepreneurs and creators lie among the great multitude of the failures, compelled to take up art, craft, music and sport" (Saturday Express, December 30 2000). This old fashioned thinking was expressed further in the fact that 'physical education' itself was accorded very low academic or intellectual value in the school curricula. Revealing the British provenance of this thinking, Jennifer Hargreaves, a top British sport scholar, writing on the development of sport studies in the UK, noted in 1982:

Physical education as a whole tended to be viewed as intellectually undemanding and devoid of 'important' and 'useful knowledge' equivalent to that of the 'academic' curriculum- an attitude supported by the historic view of physical education as a health giving process and a force for discipline and the inculcation of important values. (Hargreaves 1982: 3)

Thus while supposedly integral to the process of formal education, physical education was at the same time intellectually devalued and marginalized.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the contradictory or ambiguous association

between sport and formal education or intelligence, sport was also never really associated with the dominant notion of 'work' which, in everyday and popular usage, usually refers to some form of paid employment. And, because sport in general and amateur sport in particular was never equated with this notion of 'work', it was never really equated with financial gain. This ascetic conception of sport and its disassociation from work was strikingly illustrated in 1945 by the secretary of the Trinidad Amateur Athletic Association (TAAA) when, in defining and defending amateur sport, he stated that

Amateur sport does not fall into the category of a trade or profession where it is necessary to consider as a means to an end the requirement of the much desired "bread and butter." In principle and practice it forgets work and enters into regulated and organized play, and whoever desires to enter into the play must do so with the conscious thought of sacrificing "bread and butter" instead of trying to earn it. When this is put into correct practice, the virtue of amateurism then becomes pronounced through the individual as a high mark in character enriching his colony's glory and worth and the amateur prestige is superbly upheld. (Port of Spain Gazette, August 14 1945).

This thinking thus served to develop or reinforce a dichotomy between sport and work and to relegate sport to the sphere of 'play' and 'recreation', in the narrow, non-economic conception of these terms. Invariably, sport was not associated with the generation of wealth and potential occupations or professions, particularly those which ranked high on the professional occupational pecking order. Historically therefore, the conception of and approach to sport in the Caribbean has been informed by certain false or misleading dichotomies as between body/mind, physical/intellectual, work/play, which have contributed to its devalorization and general exclusion from Caribbean economic development and planning as well as its location at the very bottom of the traditional edifice of academic research and teaching particularly at the University level. In the traditional research and development edifice thus, apart from the issues of economic growth and economic development, the other important dimensions included: (i) education, health, poverty, crime, delinquency; (ii) political behaviour and administration (viz., electoral behaviour, constitutional reform, public sector reform, decentralization and the new buzzwords [of old vintage] called governance and policy studies); (iii) science and technology and more recently (iv) the environment. These have always been the core and overriding developmental, research and teaching concerns in the Caribbean since the early and heady days of nationalism and decolonization. In addition, this traditional agenda of teaching, research and development was reinforced further by the very policies and funding priorities of regional and international institutions

such as the UNDP, UNECLAC, and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). In this respect for instance, a 2002 circular from the CDB offering some US\$750,000.00 to the University of the West Indies for research, conferences and workshops is telling, for it stated *inter alia*:

Priority areas for funding are:

- a) poverty reduction (including, for example, health, HIV/AIDS, small and micro-enterprise development, community development/empowerment)
- b) the environment;
- c) human resource development and
- d) governance and institutional development (CDB 2002)

In other words the exclusion of sport from the process of economic development and planning in the Caribbean has been facilitated and sustained by a regional and international network of institutions whose *raison d'être* remains firmly grounded in orthodoxy and tradition where the study of poverty, crime, health and economic growth remain propitiously positioned on the pedestal of development planning, policy and policy studies.

Thus far, we have examined the traditional conception of economy together with the dominant contradictory conceptions of sport and the implications this has had for its exclusion from the process of economic development as well as University research and teaching in the Caribbean. Additionally, however, we need to examine the traditional conception of the athlete's role in society since this is also central to the dominant orthodoxy surrounding the role of sport in the development process and its exclusion from economic development.

The conception and role of the athlete in the Caribbean has been conditioned by the orthodox socio-political framework through which sport has been constructed as a social activity, which laid stress on its functionalist virtues and its associated importance to the process of identity formation. Historically, the Caribbean has produced successful athletes and teams in a range of sports that include netball, track and field, and more recently football as shown in the qualification of both Jamaica in 1998 and Trinidad and Tobago in 2006 for the World Cup of football, which were all used to celebrate the socio-political value of sport and the athlete. The game, however, which stands at the epicenter of Caribbean sport, imagination and the discourse on regional integration has been the English derived game of cricket, which can be attributed to its regional organization, the existence of a regional team (as opposed to just national teams in other sports), its formidable successes internationally in spite of a recent decline and its early incorporation into the processes of decolonization and regionalism after world war two. Given the pride of

place it occupies therefore, cricket, more than any other sport can serve to illustrate strikingly the socio-political role of the athlete in the Caribbean and its divorce from the process of capital accumulation. With particular reference to West Indies cricketers therefore, though not limited to them, the role of the athlete in the Caribbean can be summed up in the following formulations:

1. To black people, black radicals, black leaders, and their counterparts of Indian origin, the West Indian athlete (particularly West Indian cricketers) is a gladiator whose primary task and *raison d'être* is not to generate wealth through sport but to beat their opponents, particularly those that are white, and so generate pride, prestige, pleasure and feelings of power for them in order to compensate for the ravishes of British slavery, indentureship, colonialism and their historical subordination and dependent insertion in the world economic and political system.
2. An allied function of the athlete of Indian descent (particularly Indian cricketers on the West Indies cricket team) is to give visibility and voice to Indians many of whom feel alienated from a black dominated West Indian society and among whom there is still a perception of discrimination with respect to their selection on the West Indies cricket team (see Yelvington 1995).
3. The West Indian athlete is an exemplar/model, hero/heroine and symbol of anti-imperialist resistance, nationalism, sovereignty, West Indian consciousness, identity, and West Indian regional integration. It is through sport and the game of cricket in particular that the imagined West Indian nation and unity is concretized and realized if only for one match or one series of matches. Since the West Indies cricket team is not based on a legally and politically constituted West Indian nation, but the idea or dream of one, it can perhaps illustrate more than any other, the idea that a nation is an 'imagined community' although this idea is premised on such political legality (Anderson 1983).
4. Although they maybe paid, the West Indian athlete is not a worker in the conventional or legal sense of that word with an untrammelled right to protest, strike, or make demands for better wages and working conditions in their own interests and those of their families. Where they do so, they are liable

to be branded as uncommitted, indiscipline, only concerned about money, bringing the game into disrepute and possibly victimized through banning or non-selection to their national or regional teams as shown in the 1976 Kerry Packer cricket controversy (Cashmore 2000; Manley 1988) and the strike by West Indian cricketers over wages on the historic 1998-1999 tour of South Africa. (<http://www.uk.cricinfo.com//link>).

5. Thus, though they symbolize power, West Indian cricketers are generally powerless. Though they symbolize resistance, they can hardly resist and though they symbolize the voice of the downtrodden or the underdog, they themselves have little or no voice to articulate and defend their own interests less they be accused of being more concerned about self than country and region. However, for almost all other categories of workers, especially those in the unionized industrial sector, the right to strike is sacrosanct.

These formulations constitute the core of the socio-political role or definition of athletes in general in the Caribbean and cricketers in particular, which has generated ongoing tensions and conflicts with the commercialization of sport or the process of capital accumulation. This conflict or clash is captured by Beckles (1998: 19) when, in trying to account for the recent decline of the West Indies cricket team, wrote:

Today's cricket heroes .... now see themselves as individuals who wish to be identified as professional craftsmen with no primary responsibility for the wider socio-political agenda carried by their predecessors in the second paradigm. They do not wish to be role models for the youth, nor carry the burden of responsibility for nationalist pride, regional integration, and the viability of the nation state. They see themselves as apolitical, transnational global professionals, who desire to maximize financial earnings within an attractive market, and are motivated and guided by no other considerations.

While the author's statement that cricketers are "...guided by no other considerations" than "financial earnings" are questionable, it helps to show that in their attempt to construct societies and nations in the aftermath of colonialism, West Indian leaders and people have constructed athletes/players in terms of roles, which reflect their own peculiar ideals, aspirations, needs and insecurities. Thus, in the same way that the nouveaux riches and bourgeoisie of 19th century European and North American society had used amateurism to develop a particular social identity, similarly, West Indians have attempted to use sport, particularly the game of cricket, in the 20th century to develop particular ethnic,



national and regional identities but, to the detriment of the economic exploitation and development of sport.

## VII. SPORT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: THE WAY FORWARD

The use of sport to generate wealth and serve as a source of profits, income, and various careers in the Caribbean would require a radical change in orthodox thinking surrounding the notions of economy, economic development, sport and the athlete.

In relation to the economy, the orthodox and restrictive notion of economy as referring primarily to the commodities of oil, gas, steel, bauxite, sugar, bananas, and tourism has to be broadened to become more inclusive. With this in mind, it is suggested here that we see economy as representing ALL the resources in a particular territorial or geographical space, both human and non-human, that can be capitalized and monetized in such a way as to bring sustainable material benefits to the society and so aid in its total development. In such a conception, economy will include sport and popular culture in general, which today constitute two of the biggest billion dollar industries internationally. It is reasoned further that the smaller and more dependent an economy, the more important it is to use all the resources at its command to contribute to its transformation rather than relegate some to the sphere of socio-political symbolism or identity formation as has happened in sport. Within recent time in the Caribbean, while there have been several developments, which point to some change in orthodox thinking, there is still a lot more to be done.

These developments include the following:

1. The formulation of or plans to formulate official sport policies in several Caribbean countries, namely, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and Barbados.
2. The construction of several new sporting stadia and facilities in several Caribbean countries some of which has been linked to the hosting of the 2007 World Cup of cricket.
3. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, the construction of a Center for Sports and Physical Education at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus, and the introduction of an undergraduate degree programme in Sport management in 2001, together with minor certificate offerings in sport coaching.
4. The decision of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in 2004 to provide an annual grant of TT\$2,000,000.00 (roughly US\$316,000.00) to the existing professional football league over the next four years (*Trinidad Express*, January 24 2004) and the

establishment of a Sports Development Company by the Government to oversee the implementation of its sport policy.<sup>4</sup>

While these developments are welcomed, there is still a long way to go in relation to approaching sport more aggressively on a commercial basis particularly as it relates to sport manufacturing, media sponsorship, professionalization and the development of sport studies through which the labor needs for this industry can be properly trained. In any event, the above developments have not been really articulated as part of a new economic development policy or strategy, which sees sport as another pole of economic growth.

With regard to the athlete, since they are at the center of sport, there is need not so much to alter the orthodox conception of their role based on socio-political symbolism or identity formation but to broaden it, and to make it more inclusive like the notion of economy of which it should be an integral part. To this end, one suggests that we need to see the athlete first and foremost not as a gladiator who exists to satisfy the unfulfilled socio-political needs of others whether oppressed or not. Rather, they should be seen first and foremost as persons and workers who have a particular skill or talent in sport which can be so valorized and monetized that it can be used to transform their own lives, those of others, their community and their society. As a person and a worker, we must recognize that an athlete, like anybody else, has particular basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, security, motivation, personal development and legal rights to protect themselves and their livelihood. In short, the modern athlete in the Caribbean can no longer be seen as simply a gladiator of Roman vintage who exists solely for the pleasure of the masses and their leaders or to fill a void in the crucible of power relations between center and periphery. In this suggested reconceptualization of the athlete and sport, one sees no necessary conflict or incompatibility between their historical symbolic socio-political role and the generation of wealth. If anything, it is felt that the latter can serve to solidify or enhance the former since the more well off the athlete, the stronger or more potent is their value as a symbol of resistance, independence, pride, power, prestige and self-esteem for their supposed downtrodden, powerless sistren and brethren, victims of the past, present and future. In other words, in the modern world of sport, identity formation and capital accumulation should not be seen as poles apart but as merely two sides of the same coin.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

Internationally, modern sport has come a very long way from being a religious ritual for paying homage to Gods to being an activity being

heavily driven by the profit motive, research, science and technology. After a period of stringent and fierce opposition to professional sports from the adherents of amateurism, sport is now firmly planted in the economic mainstream of several developed and developing nations and not restricted to civil society and the polity to serve as cannon fodder for some idyllic socio-political process of identity formation. In these societies, although there is frequent debate and tension over the nature of player commitment and motivation towards the troika of country, club and cash, the use of sport for the generation of wealth or capital accumulation has largely been accommodated alongside its historical socio-political function which is not exactly the case in the Anglophone Caribbean. Here, the legitimizing or validating framework for the conduct and support of sporting activity continues to be driven and dominated by one main thing, identity formation, which is centred around three main related 'isms': moralism, nationalism and regionalism. In these roles, sport simultaneously serves both a systemic function (to develop good character, unity etc.) and an anti-systemic one as a symbol of political resistance and independence although this is undermined by our continued dependence on foreign sport goods, services and opportunities. As a result of the dominant focus, the discourse on sport in the Caribbean has been trapped in an unrelentless orgy of nationalism and regionalism similar to other parts of the world (Bairner 2001; Maguire 2005). Due to this, leadership in the Anglophone Caribbean, whatever its gender or ethnic derivation, be it Caucasian, African or Indian, has been an unrepentant and unmitigated disaster in relation to the development of sport either as an industry or as an area of study. While there have been recent attempts in the latter direction, if sport is to become an integral part of Caribbean economic development and constitute an industry in its own right, it will require a more radical, iconoclastic departure from orthodox notions of economy, public policy, sport, and education on the part of both the state, civil society, the business sector as well as sport administrators. Without this rethinking, the chasm between identity formation and capital accumulation in sport will continue to the detriment of sport and the economy.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In 1900, this Empire contained 660 million people spread over 12 million square miles (Sandiford 1994: 1-2).

<sup>2</sup> The West Indies cricket team was the dominant team in the game internationally between 1976 and 1995 (Manley 1988; Beckles 1998) but today is ranked 7th among the 10 top nations in world cricket.

- <sup>3</sup> The devalorization of physical education as well as the general study of sport is a worldwide phenomenon which has also existed in Latin America (Mangan and Da Costa 2002), Asia (Mangan and Fan Hong 2003) as well as the United States (Coakley 1987; Ingham and Donnelly 1997).
- <sup>4</sup> In the middle of the 2007 World Cup of cricket, held in the Caribbean for the first time, a conference on the Trinidad and Tobago economy was held by the Department of Economics at the University of the West Indies, Trinidad Campus. However, not a single panel or paper dealt with the economics of the World Cup and particularly in light of the questions that arose surrounding its benefits to the region (Jamaican Gleaner, January 25 2007; Sunday Express, April 8 2007). Rather, the conference dealt with the same old wine (gas, oil, financial sector, labour market etc), in the same old bottles (e.g., Farrell, Pantin, St. Cyr). In spite of the above sport initiatives therefore, what we have is a classic case of continuity with change as it relates to the non-incorporation of sport in the process of economic development.

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