



For references:

Cardias-Gomes, F.J. (2019) *Ethnosport Psychology: A model of traditional games of indigenous people of the Eastern Amazon*. *International Journal of Ethnosport and Traditional Games*, 2 (2), 63–75. DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.34685/IJ.2020.60.86.005>

ETHNOSPORT PSYCHOLOGY: A MODEL OF TRADITIONAL GAMES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE EASTERN AMAZON

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Abstract

The present study intended to develop the ethnosport social psychology, oriented on indigenous corporality and traditional sport and games of them, with log race detailed research of the Timbira people (macro Jê language) in Eastern Amazon. It was hypothesized that log race is an ethnosport that can be consider under the Amazonian perspectivism, while the body making of Timbira people is made by this practice involves the common participation of all members of the community. Such practices are adopted the concepts of: a) ethnosport as conceived by Kylasov; b) the modern experience of traditional sports and games events of Siberians who have much in common with Brazilian, especially on the Timbira log race; c) the Amazon-Amerindian perspectivism and/or the multinaturalism versus multiculturalism originated in the concept of Viveiros-de-Castro, as well his d) Anti-Narcissistic critics, founding echo in post-Jungian and Deleuze-Guattari's postulates. A study to establish the social psychology of ethnosport was conducted with an appeal to a qualitative method, observation included during many visits in the last five years, 2015–2019, in Timbira communities around the Indigenous Land of Timbira in Maranhão State. As example of included observation was analysis, it was discussed the form of log racing as remarking of the collective suffering, inside the cycle of mourning rituals of Timbira's communities. This study inheres leded us to conclude that we are witnessing the increasing, emerging and urgency of an "new" ethnosport imaginaries, with all its pedagogical potency, or tendency, to an alternative way facing ethnocentric and Euro-colonized Anglo-Saxon sport and its body and human concepts. This itself is enough to challenge myself to find theoretical-methodological tools in a psychosocial-interdisciplinary approach to contribute to the increasing phenomenon of world ethnosport studies, in order to promote it and sustainable development.

Key words: Amazonian-Amerindian Perspectivism, Ethnosport Psychology, Indigenous Peoples, Multinaturalism, Traditional Sports and Games.



Introduction

This article is intended for the model construction, albeit essayistic, of a new line of study and research, which still fits within the field of sport psychology, but already declared as the psychology of ethnosport, indigenous corporeality and their traditional games. It is not found in Brazilian – or foreign – academic literature any material on the subject, and this article inaugurates the relation regarding psychology and ethnosport. There are sport psychology essays about sports performance, school sports, sport as leisure, physical exercise and mental health, many other traditional research lines, but there is a gap in the psychology of modern forms of traditional sports and games (TSG) or ethnosport. This can be explained by historical issues of psychology, sports of Olympic Games, the market in the area, the high-yielding psychology seen as financially promising. In the other hand, the scarce opportunity – or a low interesting on – to follow TSG in Indigenous Lands (IL), which are of difficult access, even in remote area, which require a significant amount of will, desire or intention to research them. Anyway is a need of mine and rather collective.

Especially, my personal motivation to relate psychology to ethnosport is due to the desire to study indigenous communities, their rites, myths, cultures, consciousness, corporeality, their moving body-consciousness, their communal behavior. Fate has led me, as a federal civil servant, to the proximity of IL near my home, especially the Teneteharas (Tupi-Guajajaras) and Timbiras (macro Jê language) people in Eastern Amazon, in the states of Maranhão, Pará and Tocantins (Tocantins border), which have permanent practice of several ways of TSG, such as the millenary log race, and Anglo-Saxon sports adopted as training practices of their youth, such as English soccer – very popular in Brazil. Hence, my personal motivation came across the professional opportunity and is developing in this sense, the search and construction of knowledge on this subject in teaching, extension and university research, state and public activities.

However, the main objective of this preliminary study is, besides an intellectual exercise, the beginning of a rational and sensitive (thinking-sentient) positioning in putting together the themes ‘psychology’ and ‘ethnosport’. To do so, I must to report some experiences, domestic and international, and how they impacted me to dare try and challenge the construction, or who knows, the inauguration of a new line of study, either within my own studies and research group or by making a contribution that establish an international network with other researchers interested in the field. What is already in the way.

In this brief introduction, I have expressed my interest, motifs and initial search for the development of the theme, following by reporting the importance of my experience in Russia, in particular the observation at an ethnosport event of Siberian peoples, followed by the TSG of indigenous people Timbiras, with which I am involved in the Amazon, ending with some final considerations and the classic and current bibliographical references that underlie this study.

It is noteworthy to affirm that this work does not end the theme, but begins the discussion of what I thought about, what I studied and what I developed recently. Thus, this is the beginning of the research work on the relationship between psychology and TSG, which we will call “ethnosport”, according to the definition proposed by my



colleague and friend Alexey Kylasov in 2011¹.

Another important note is the current agenda in Brazil, which are worth mentioning, even if briefly: a) the threat to people, forest and Amazonian fauna by economic policy, miners, ranchers and loggers, national and international; b) the advent of traditional sports and games in the last years, since those were hardly heard of, rare studies on them, and c) the regular meeting of researchers under the aegis of the World Ethnosport in a different perspectives of TSG, as: philosophical, anthropological philosophical, anthropological, sociological, historical and now, psychological, or better, psychosocial.

Ethnosport in Siberia: Festival Vit Hon Khatl of the Khanty and Mansyi

At the end of June 2019, I had a chance to visit the Vit Khon Hatl festival (Water spirit, Siberian myths), which took place in the suburbs of Surgut, in the Khanty-Mansyi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra. This region is a centre of Russian oil production and oil workers make up the majority of the population of Western Siberia. In recent years, regional authorities have allocated money and help to hold this festival, their goal is a dialogue of cultures of the indigenous population and immigrants from all over the country, who came to extract oil and gas. The festival was held on the holy day of worshipping the *Water Spirit* of the Khanty and Mansyi peoples. After the traditional rite, general festivities are held with traditional games, in the program of which there are competitions in the null-tahli traditional wrestling, traditional archery and various game playing. But the main event is becoming the International Oblas (kayak) Races for the Governor Cup of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug – Ugra. The Governor Natalya Komarova personally attended the races and awarded the winners, and she also attended the General Meeting of the World Ethnosport Society, which was held as part of the festival. It is important to note that all members of the World Ethnosport took part in races and traditional games². All this, including the revival of the festival and the support of the authorities, was made possible thanks to the founding president of the World Ethnosport Society, Russian cultural anthropologist Dr. Alexey Kylasov, whose work I refer to many times in this article.

I was struck by conversations I have had with the Siberian Indians, albeit briefly, by the mentions of the Capital threat similar to those suffered by the South American Amerindian people, such as those near Imperatriz, the Amazonian city where I work as an educator and researcher. This contact was extremely important because I came back with new reflections, an international overview regarding self-organization of indigenous people, with strong motivation to engage in theoretical and militant dialogues between psychology and ethnosport, with the intercultural approach of myth-body-community experience study, which reverberates since the sight in Siberia.

Participation in the event in a new format, the concept of which was created in accordance with the theory of ethnosport, made it possible to concentrate on the problem of the relationship between psychology and ethnosport, which dates back to the definition of relativism:

¹ Kylasov, A., Gavrov, S. (2011) "Ethnocultural diversity of sport". Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems (UNESCO-EOLSS). March 23th 2019, retrieved from: <http://www.eolss.net/Sample-Chapters/C05/E6-168-59.pdf>

² General Meeting of the World Ethnosport Society. Website of the World Ethnosport. December 10th 2019, retrieved from: <http://ru.ethnosport.org/news/122.htm>



“The term [ethnosport] itself is correlated with the concept of "cultural relativism". The direction in ethnography that Denies ethnocentrism or Eurocentric of Euro-American values and recognizes that all cultures of all nations are equal, and this is defined according to the theoretical concept of Franz Boas (1858–1942)”³.

In tune with Kylasov, we also understand safeguarding the culture of peoples in the context of globalization, which in its negative aspect carries and educates for alienation. Also the protection of traditional practices of physical activity through becoming sports, like everything else on the Global market, ends up being swallowed by a Eurocentrism and Americentrism designed either as relativism or as equality without diversity. As soon as the concept of ethnosport arose, and now again, like running in place in the study of sport and its development, this concept begins to undergo differentiation, using techniques close to sports science. Fake organizations have appeared that claim to be the “Olympic Games” of ethnosport.

On the contrary, there are relativisms of equality, with the widening and differentiation of diversity, the abundance of plurality, a transculturally with very rich morphological differences, which must not wither, be reduced or die for the sake of the Global market. As Kylasov rightly argues, and we followed him: nothing should be considered strange or exotic if it happens and corresponds to the original religious, physical, spiritual, ethnic and cultural, and does not come from ultra-modern *homo-mulier sapiens sapiens*⁴.

The traditional games of indigenous peoples in Brazil

As well defended by the indigenous educator Daniel Mundurucu (2019), from the Mundurucu people, Pará State, Indigenous people should be called as such, and not Indians, a term coined in Western culture⁵. The ‘Indian’ term carries a heavy, colonialist historical burden given by the European conqueror on his way to the East and West Indies at the time of the Portuguese caravels. So, I opt for the term Indigenous People, because they don't have a better one, or sometimes Native People, less stigmatizing than Aboriginal, savage, primitive, term which demeans, colonizes, ridicules others’ cultures, as in the term Aboriginal from Australia, which negatively denotes them, colonially separating the savages-them and the civilized-us-rulers. However, the paradox is that the continued domination of civilized people leads who destroy these indigenous people does not accept their “primitive” non-modern ways of

³ Kylasov, Alexey. (2012) "Ethnosport. The End of Decline" (Sport: Kultur, Veränderung / Sport: Culture, Change). Published by LIT Verlag, 2015. Pp. 90-91.

⁴ At the request of our journal, a comment on this concept was given by Vsevolod Zolotukhin, a specialist in modern religiosity from the Higher School of Economics (Moscow): “In this case we certainly deal with the particular Feminist neologism. Because of their conviction, the term 'homo' as a name of the genus possesses some sexist meaning shade, (in Latin 'homo' signifies equally human being/man as well as male), they proposed such addition as "homo mulier". At the same time, at least two mistakes could be found here. First, (logical mistake), biological taxonomy naturally includes the both genders: it is absurd to consider woman as not homo. Sex and genus are different categories related to the different scopes. Second, from the linguistic point of view, the correct pair to Latin "homo" is the term "femina". whilst "mulier" (wife) is connected to "vir" (husband, adult man), i.e. "homo" vs "femina" looks like "human being" vs "wife".

⁵ Mundurucu, Daniel. (2019) “From the things I learned: essays on well-being ». Lorraine: DM Productions.



life, that does not consume the land and the water insanely, nor contributes to extermination of their own kind.

My interest in indigenous peoples, their communities and their cultures, and then their awareness of themselves and others, is due to childhood and adolescent readings of thematic magazines, such as National Geographic International; to my young eyes these people were exotic, wild, and above all, beautiful in their diversities, for a boy raised in a metropolis with a homogenized environment. Living for a long time in the cosmopolitan São Paulo, with Italian, Spanish and other white migrant accents from Europe, my origin is Paraense, Belenense, from Belém do Pará, where my earliest memories are from the big trees, from indigenous people in the city centre, often begging for food or money, selling handicrafts for a living, and the dark skinned, mestizo, cabocla, “Indigenous-faced” population.

And now, in adulthood and professional life, I live in a region that calls itself the Amazonian gateway, in the middle of the transition between cerrado and forest. Therefore, close to several communities of indigenous peoples – long ago contacted, such as 80 years ago or more, and recently contacted, such as 20 years or less, and with the extraordinary uncontacted ones, like the Awá-Guajás. It is an honour to have these communities three hours away from home; they are threatened by the civilizing process and contact policies for the control and destruction of their forest by loggers, farmers and miners, professional killers of Nature. This is what approaches us and makes us adopt the praxiological approach proposed by Kylasov⁶.

All over Brazil there are Indigenous Lands that serve as a protection to these people contacted by the violent process of European Invasion-Colonization-Westernization since the 16th century, still misplaced, misunderstood, poorly listened to, with little voice in public policies and state officials – albeit with resistance of majority. On the other hand, learned with much suffering and pain, with increasing national and international representations. Recently we have to fight due to the threat to the Amazonian people, forest and fauna inflicted by the economic policy, mining, farmers and loggers. The moment of resistance is fertile, since in recent years we have seen an increase in interest in the entire culture of indigenous peoples, including TSG. Previously, you could only hear about traditional games or occasionally watch them play, although there are rare studies and various events becoming known, and there were also meetings of researchers of TSG in an interdisciplinary perspective, it was this small contribution that became the harbinger of the emergence of the *psychology of ethnosport*.

The Brazilian Ministry of Sports website has a register of events, thirteen of which are announced by Marcos Terena, a national leader of the indigenous peoples, he is from the Terena people. He headed the organization of the Indigenous Intertribal Committee to hold the Indigenous Peoples Games with the motto “The important thing is not to compete, but to celebrate”. The editions took place from 1996 to 2013, aimed to integrate indigenous peoples into the process of saving traditional festive culture, it was also called Indigenous Olympic Games, as if it were a native-style Olympics, or Green Olympics, focused on the binomial man/nature and indigenous international integration, and the opening of the event was a spiritual ceremony of Igniting the Sacred Fire, promoted by indigenous spiritual leaders.

⁶ Kylasov, A. (2019) “Traditional sports and games along the Silk Roads”. International Journal of Ethnosport and Traditional Games, (1), 1–10. DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.34685/HI.2019.1.1.006>



The Brazilian Traditional Indigenous Sports Festival was for a week's duration; it welcomed eight thousand people daily, related the concept binomial tradition/technology and facilitated knowledge sharing, native seeds and interethnic and racial relations between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples' legacy. In 2015, the first *World Indigenous Games* were held, which consisted of two parts – *Integration Games and Demonstration Games*⁷.

The *Integration Games* programme is composed of competitions that can be found in most indigenous peoples of Brazil, the organizers have made universal rules for bow and arrow, spear throwing, tug of war, 100-meter sprint, long distance race, running with a log, canoeing, swimming/river-crossing and also included an Anglo-Saxon football tournament⁸. Apparently this was done to include the Games on the global information agenda after the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil. And the games themselves were trying to position themselves as a national prologue to the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

The *Demonstration Games* programme is composed of the traditional competitions of the ethnic groups present⁹:

- **Ako** – a speed race similar to the 4 x 400 m relay in athletics, practiced only by the Gavião Parkatêjê and the Kiykatêjê peoples. Two teams, couples or singles run in circles, using a small bamboo stick as a baton, which is handed off from one runner to the next. The winners are the ones who will stay in the last circle.
- **Jawari** – practiced exclusively by the High Xingu River region in the state of Mato Grosso. Fifteen athletes in team. One athlete from each of the teams simultaneously takes the position in front carrying a blunt arrow and proceed as if in a dance to throw or avoid being hit by the arrow of the adversaries. Whomever the tip of the arrow from the adversary hits is out of the game or 'dies'. This proceeds until only two players are left. The person who 'kills' the last opponent is the winner.
- **Jikunahati** – the participants can only use the head to compete in this game, which is also known as 'head football', practiced by the Paresi people. Xikunahaty, zigunahiti – is another name of the game, which use a latex ball manufactured by the Paresi, Nambikwara and Enawenê Nawê peoples from the state of Mato Grosso.
- **Kaipy** – this is the exercise of shooting arrows practiced by the Gavião Parkatêjê and Kiykatêjê peoples of the south of the state of Pará. Need to hit the target from the leaves that are folded and attached to the ground in a vertical position. The central stripe of the leaf is supported by two pieces of wood attached to the ground. At a distance of five to ten meters, the warrior shoots at the folded palm leaf trying to get as close as possible to the central stripe of the leaf. This way the arrow does not bounce off and the leaf serves as a springboard.
- **Kagot** – it is similar to Jawari, a game of arrows also played by 15 or more

⁷ Roque, Lucas; Terena, Marcos; Calfin, Juan Antonio; Terena, Taily. (2017) "World Indigenous Games". Published in 2017 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in cooperation with the Ministry of Sports in Brazil (ME), the Intertribal Committee (ITC), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.



persons, practiced of the Xikrin and Kayapó people in the state of Pará. Arrows are also prepared with a blunt edge to reduce the risk of harming the warrior who is hit. The practice begins when one warrior carrying an arrow from each team moves towards the centre of the field to provoke the adversary. One of them will take the initiative to try to hit the opponent by throwing the arrow. If the arrow hits the opponent, a point is won; if it does not hit the target, the first thrower becomes the target. This goes on successively until there are only two competitors in the field.

- **Katukaywa** – a modality of football, in which the knees do the kicking. Practiced by the Indigenous peoples of Xingu in the state of Mato Grosso.
- **Ronkrã** – it is similar to grass hockey or lacrosse in Canada, a team sport practiced by the Kayapó people in the state of Pará. Players are divided into two teams of ten or more members each. At first, the teams are face to face. The ball is placed in the centre of the field. Carrying a *borduna* (a sort of wooden stick), each athlete has the goal is to score a small coconut ball behind the opponent's line.
- **Tihimore** – ball-throwing game practiced by the women from the Paresi people, who live in the state of Mato Grosso.
- **Traditional wrestling styles:** *Aipenkuit* practiced only by the male members of the Gavião Kyikatêjê people, from the state of Pará; *Huka-Huka* or *Ikindene* practiced by men and women from the peoples of the Xingu River; *Iwo* practiced by the Xavante people from the state of Mato Grosso; *Idjassú* practiced by the Karajá people, who live in the Bananal Island.
- **Zarabatana** – a dart-throwing game that uses blowpipes practice by the Matis people.

I must say that the organizers without good reason announced the success of their activity, although the indicators of their achievements are very doubtful: of the 305 indigenous peoples of Brazil, only 48 took part in the games – only 15.74%. States participation indicators raise even more questions about the adequacy of positive assessments. For example, according to the organizers, Russia was represented by a singer who performed a song between competitions. Meanwhile, 190 nations live in Russia, but there was no official delegation. So why do we need speculation with the fact of Russia's participation? And is it possible to consider the arrival of teams (from 1 to 6 persons) from 24 countries (9.56%) when there are 251 states in the world?

In addition, the games were organized excluding holiday calendars and rituals of the indigenous peoples, with tourist goals, although with some pedagogical effect and a positive message, which positively affected intercultural and interethnic cooperation, but with appeal to the Western calendar, outside the context of traditional life style of local communities and of the ritualistic practice of modalities: birth, initiation into adulthood, marriage, harvesting, hunting, gathering, mourning. It is precisely on this that Kylasov emphasizes, calling for the preservation of TSG¹⁰.

According to Kylasov, our interest is reaffirmed by the study of these traditional modalities within the context, calendar and communities in which they add the meaning of their rituals existence. Some are adapted at the time of harvest, such as the

¹⁰ Kylasov, A. (2019) "Traditional sports and games along the Silk Roads". International Journal of Ethnosport and Traditional Games, (1), 1–10. DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.34685/HI.2019.1.1.006>



Chestnut Festival, near my home region, but with a big event style, with audience and advanced media, of the Gavião people from Pará. It is up to us researchers to take all care, reflection and a critical approach to safeguard an ethnosport modalities that may fall under the erosion of traditional values outside their local community of indigenous people, innovating their own traditions without fragmenting the communal person. This is already the case, with the loss of language, mythology and de-individualization of their practices, unfortunately in most cases.

It is worth noting that the Brazilian ethnologist José Ronaldo Fassheber for the work "Etno-Desporto Indígena: a Antropologia Social e o campo entre os Kaingang" (2010)¹¹ received the Ministry of Sport of Brazil 1st Prize on Social Including Sport and Leisure. Fassheber relies on the anthropological-social bias, also studying Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002), Pierre Parlerbas, other Kylasov-like authors, and leading Brazilian authors on corporeality and indigenous games, from the pioneer and classic German ethnologist Curt Nimuendajú (1883–1945), in "The Timbira Log Race" (1946)¹², republished in 2001¹³, to the most influential modern Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiraus de Castro, representing the perspectives of native peoples in the work of "Cannibal Metaphysics" (2018)¹⁴. With emphasis in Fassheber's works however on modern football practiced amidst the Kaingang people, giving a different connotation to the ethnosport, significantly different from the aforementioned ethnosport concept, which Kylasov proposed.

Fassheber does not agree with the ethnosport mission to preserve the ritual function of the gatherings, according to Kylasov. The modern mold of the Indigenous Games falls under Kylasov's criticism, he points out that despite the voluntary distribution of this model, there is a degeneration and a risk of an erosion of sportization. Which served, serves, and will serve the civilization process of colonization, even if the indigenous themselves re-read and contaminate them with ethnosport elements, as suggested as a comment to be observed, which I completely agree with Kylasov.

Therefore, adopting the differentiation of Kylasov (2011)¹⁵ in the conceptualization of ethnosport, we disagree on important guidelines and aspects of Terena, Fassheber and other original authors on the subject, even if pointing to positive aspects of the Games, such as interculturality, but even thus, a hierarchical interculturality between Western values even though mixed with indigenous reading, but now subordinate to the former, a false emancipation. So I believe that this strategy is colonizing and therefore dangerous to the very movement of ethnosport in its original contexts, vide the marketing force, the appeal to folklore movement and the struggle

¹¹ Fassheber, J. R. M. (2010) "Etno-Desporto Indígena: a Antropologia Social e o campo entre os Kaingang". 1ª, ed. Brasília: Ministério do Esporte.

¹² Nimuendajú, Kurt. (1946) "The Eastern Timbira". University of California Publications in American Archeology and Ethnology, vol. 41, Berkeley and Los Angeles.

¹³ Nimuendajú, Kurt. (2001) "A corrida de toras dos Timbira". In: Revista MANA. v.7. n.2. Rio de Janeiro: Contra Capa.

¹⁴ Viveiros-de-Castro, Eduardo. (2018) "Metafísicas canibais: elementos para uma antropologia pós-estrutural". São Paulo: Ubu editora.

¹⁵ Kylasov, A., Gavrov, S. (2011) "Ethnocultural diversity of sport". Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems (UNESCO-EOLSS). March 23th 2019, retrieved from: <http://www.eolss.net/Sample-Chapters/C05/E6-168-59.pdf>



for the natural resources of indigenous peoples.

Despite the fact that indigenous people were engaged in agriculture before contact with the West, hunters and gatherers, as the Isolated-On-The-Run People have continued for millennia, which diminishes over time, becomes sedentary and feeds on processed foods and sparkling water at ceremonies, causing them high rates of diabetes and other illnesses associated with the consumption of industrialized and/or canned foods.

Games of indigenous peoples may become a charming trap, disguising the preservation of traditions. An example of such a semantic trap was the so-called Gavião people's football, which gained national and international fame and attracted local financial and political resources. But did this "Gavião people's football" become interesting for the media or FIFA?

Just to observe that, despite the public reach of the Indigenous Games being notorious, nationally and internationally, the last Brazilian edition was in 2013, six years ago. But the Games having fulfilled an important social role. Events such as the Chestnut Harvest Festival from the Gavião from Pará, it has been resisting the colonialists for centuries, whether long-contacted communities as recently contact.

Recently, a special understanding of corporeality has been established, the movement and pedagogy of body, the game, the ethnosport, are present in all ethnic groups. In addition to the aforementioned researchers Nimuendaju and Fassheber, Julio Cesar Mellati¹⁶ contributed to the study of the game practices of the native population of Brazil. Another important work by Marina Herrero and Ulysses Fernandes, two Brazilian researchers from indigenous people with the support and sponsorship of the Social Service of Commerce of São Paulo identified, researched and catalogued 25 games in the book "Jogos e Brincadeiras na Cultura Kalapalo" (2010)¹⁷.

Ethnosport psychology of the Timbiras people

To build a model of the psychology of ethnosport, its theoretical and methodological basis, I chose an ethnosport of the Timbiras people, known as the Log Race. One of the reasons for starting such a narrative is the experience of years observing such a modality of physical activity, completely integrated with the way of life and cosmogony of this people. This fact is due to the proximity of my home in Imperatriz. My position of professor-researcher in psychology, with increasing interest in mental health and indigenous peoples' psychology, I joined the crew of the World Ethnosport under the leadership of cultural scientist Alexey Kylasov, repeatedly mentioned above. Currently now, eight years of observation, I am starting to model the psychology of ethnosport with reference to the already mentioned works of Niemandajú and Melatti. Also, more recently, the collective work "Nossas corridas de Tora: cultura viva Timbira" coordinated by Maria Elisa Ladeira (2013)¹⁸.

About the running with a log Nimuendajú calls attention to:

"None of the numerous ceremonies that constitute public life among the Timbira

¹⁶ Melatti, J. C. (1978) "Ritos de uma Tribo Timbira". São Paulo: Ática.

¹⁷ Herrero, Marina; Fernandes, Ulysses. (2010) "Jogos e Brincadeiras na Cultura Kalapalo". Edições Sesc São Paulo.

¹⁸ "Nossas corridas de Tora: cultura viva Timbira". (2013) Coordenação e edição Maria Elisa Ladeira; organização e edição Daniela Leme da Fonseca. São Paulo: Centro de Trabalho Indigenista.



catches the attention of the civilized as well as the log race. This is due to the fact that after the dance in the courtyard of the village, this is the most repeated ceremony in everyday life of Indigenous people and, dramatically, more impressive. On the other hand, it is difficult to understand the dizzying speed of the event, which is usually over before the visitor has time to see it properly. For this reason, most of the information about it is the apparent totally or partially second hand”¹⁹.

The log racing theme in Brazilian scientific literature will be taken in Melatti (1976, 1978), recalling what Nimuendajú reported years ago, as reproduced below:

“The common belief among us is that log race is a marriage test: a boy can only get married when he can run with a log on his shoulders. But such an explanation probably does not apply to any of the tribes that practice this race. This belief may be the result of hasty interpretations of people who have seen or heard of the races. This false image, disseminated in several books, is often reinforced by the Indigenous for convenience, to avoid a very complex response to the curious ones who are completely unaware of their customs. They identify race as a test for marriage. Experienced ethnologist Curt Nimuendajú once surprised a young Indigenous by explaining to a newly arrived police lieutenant that his fellow tribesmen could only get married after passing the race test. As the researcher asked the Indigenous why he had given the wrong information, he answered with a smile: “Why, he understands nothing about it!”²⁰

As Melatti pointed that every log race is always associated with some rite, that it takes place with runners divided into two rival parties, running is always carried out around the village or only inside it, but never anywhere outside of it, that in the village the race is on the way circular, always counter clockwise. According Melatti, that both parties unite to take something into the village, the result of the race being a conjunction, communion, co-implication and sharing. For this reason, log racing has both the aspect of play and rite. And it's about this game-rite ethnosport body-ancestor and that mythopoetic that we below outline an essay on the psycho-social-politic-communitarian practices, in a general way. To try, we used a basic theoretical framework, as ethnosport theory by Kylasov and his other publications on this topic (2015, 2018, 2019).

Running with a log was always accompanied by special chants and arranged on the following occasions: i) logs related to the life cycle, ii) logs related to initiation and iii) logs connected to the annual cycle. But it is worth pointing out that this manifestation of the Timbira culture-politics-formation had mythological beginning: annual maize cycle (Ponhuprô), potato (Jatjôpin), change of season (Párti), initiation of 9-16 year olds (Kêetwaje, Ikrerékam and Pempacahàac), animal-human relations in the ritual of fish (Tepjarkwa), porridge (Krokroc), masks (Kô´krit´hô), rituals of assumption and the surrender of dignity (Wyty), the end of the parents’ protection for the birth of their children, reintroducing someone away for a long time from the village, because of disease or mourning.

Mourning log races are named Parpex or Parpej, they are performed by men and women, men run first and women go next day. The logs are about one-meter-long and can weigh between 70kg and 90kg or more, and at the beginning of the race are raised by people who are related to the deceased. Interestingly this ritual exchanges

¹⁹ Nimuendajú, Kurt. (2001) “A corrida de toras dos Timbira”. In: Revista MANA. v.7. n.2. Rio de Janeiro: Contra Capa. P. 151-152.

²⁰ Melatti, J. C. (1978) “Ritos de uma Tribo Timbira”. São Paulo: Ática. P. 136.



the strong interrelatedness always present among all the Indigenous at the time of sadness as a communitarian sense the pain is ours.

From both parties, the party may request the family to begin this ritual, as long as it is a close relative of the family, and once accepted, the ritual begins, the party-play and the frame of one to three months of howling and end of the mourning. They provide the ritual-party with food, which involves hunting. In my early remarks I noticed only women, although literature points out that it can be done by both women and men, and the report that it begins in the house where the person lived and extends to weeping in to places which the deceased one enjoyed to be, recollecting group stories, group memories, and striking affectivity in relation to people and the community with the dead, elaborating the mourning as collective suffering.

Discussion of research results

If we brand to consider indigenous games as ethnosport, it urges full respect to their indigenous calendar, rituals of life cycle, initiations and annual cycle, which can be under partial accordance or in little tension with the two organizational models of preservation of them: ethnosport and ethnic styled sport. According to the results of the study of Kylasov and Gureeva (2019)²¹, ethnosport provides the most social effectiveness in promoting traditional sports and games, with clear advantages over ethnic styled sport. We find an intuitive confirmation of this thesis in a comparison of Indigenous Games (ethnically stylized sports) and Timbira traditional sports, incorporated into primordial rituals (ethnosport).

As *areté* or *virtuous* of the Ancient Greeks and Romans were Legacy, in an Amerindian-perspective still alive into communitary sense of ceremonial-competitions. The heroic attitude of a Timbira log runner resists, strong and brings us all the potential to make real the decolonization of our Eurocentric imaginaries, as once we spread that we need to decolonize our imaginary in search of new ones, intercultural and intracultural by Dantas (2012)²² or immanent to multinaturalist and intranaturalist by De Castro (2018)²³. Amerindian way of competition inside ritual calendars, ethnosport, gets its increasing chance and its turn to take important part on this task. So, let's not dismisses this chance. Because, the same considerations we can do to the construction and multiplicity of the *sportif imaginaire* by Katia Rubio:

"The expectations generated around sports lead to certain behavioural patterns that will influence or determine the conduct of those who choose sports as a profession. This is the reason why around a specific modality and sport as a whole develops a set of collective practices and individual behaviours called sports culture (2006)²⁴. These behaviours and

²¹ Kylasov, A., Gureeva, E. (2019) "Ethnosport and ethnic styled sport: comparative analysis of social efficiency". International Journal of Ethnosport and Traditional Games, (1), 60–68. DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.34685/HI.2019.1.1.010>

²² Dantas, Sylvia. (2012) "Intercultural Dialogues: Interdisciplinary Reflections and Psychosocial Interventions". Ed. IEA-USP: São Paulo.

²³ Viveiros-de-Castro, Eduardo (2018) "Metafísicas canibais: elementos para uma antropologia pós-estrutural". São Paulo: Ubu editora.

²⁴ Rubio, Katia. (1999) "The psychology of sport: history and areas of research and research". In: Psychology: Science and Profession. Psicol. science prof., vol.19, no.3, Brasília, 1999.



procedures lead to the creation and multiplication of what we call sports imagination (2018)²⁵.

Roberto Rosas Fernandes notes²⁶ that contemporary sports imagery contributes to negative aspects of that imaginary as well, especially a negative Narcissism of multiculturalist Western culture, the growing ethnosport imaginary contributes to a native, communal Anti-Narcissism, diluted in the concept of person-human extended to all those who are part of community: from men and women to animals, trees and even the spectators, as well as the Amazonian and multinaturalist Amerindian perspectivism, by which the soul is a priori given to all, the western make-the-soul is the Amerindian make-the-body, reversing the logic that humanity is attained so that humanity is a collective given post of the beginning and we can only understand this diversity of human bodies by James Hillman (1926–2011)²⁷. In accordance with the perspectives of Viveiros-de-Castro, where we find valuable echo and potent breath to what we came to assume in this study, converging post-Jungian and Deleuze & Guattari postulates²⁸.

Conclusion

Not only is fulfilled the main objective, which was firing questions and preliminary illustrations to put together the subject of study: psychology and ethnosport. In the future, more specifically and theoretically, it will be necessary to think about praxeological strategies, such as the Ethnosport Challenge concept, that serves to strengthen, empowering and safeguarding of TSG in their native calendar-rituals. As well as for me it has been being more clear from the experience observed among the Khanty and Mansyi peoples that dialogue with the Timbira peoples in various comparative aspects, especially psychological ones such as personal-community self-development and identity processes under constant threat of survival and physical, cultural and symbolic violence perpetrated by western civilization.

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²⁵ Rubio, Katia. (2018) "A cultura na Psicologia do Esporte: por uma Psicologia Social do Esporte". In: Revista Psicologia Ciência e Profissão: Diálogos Psicologia do Esporte – o corpo em movimento. Brasília: Conselho Federal de Psicologia. Ano 14, 9 de dezembro de 2018.

²⁶ Fernandes, R. R. (2017) "Abismos Narcísicos: a psicodinâmica do amadurecimento e da individuação". Curitiba: Appris.

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