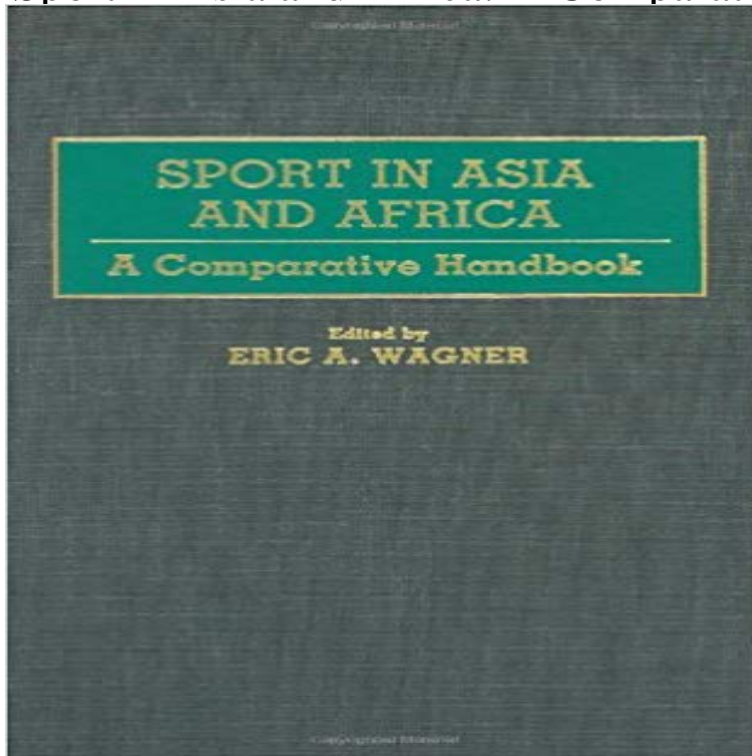


Sport in Asia and Africa: A Comparative Handbook



Why sports? What is their function in society, how are they organized, and why do people participate? This groundbreaking volume is filled with descriptive data relating to these questions and many others, and it does what none has done previously, by bringing together an edited collection of essays that describe and compare sport in twelve Asian and African nations from a social science perspective. Written by an international team of anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, and physical educators, these chapters are not accounts by scholars viewing sport from afar; each writer is either a native of the country or has spent extensive time there teaching and/or conducting research. For ease of comparison, each chapter adheres to a common format, beginning with an historical overview of the development of sport in that country that focuses on indigenous traditional sports, the development of modern sports, and the place of contemporary sports. A description of the way sports are organized follows and includes discussions of the role of schools and government involvement. Next, where data were available, the authors evaluated levels of sports participation, including such variables as age, gender, social class, and urban or rural residence. An account is also presented of the nature of participation and success of the country in international sports competitions. Each chapter closes with an insightful appraisal of the future of sport in that country. Seven figures and more than 25 tables facilitate comparisons, as does the editors introductory essay that provides an overview of the following chapters. In the second introductory essay, Ruud Stokvis examines the process of international diffusion of sport, arguing that changes in sport participation patterns in countries over time reflect changes both in the world system and in the class

structure of modernizing societies. Sport in Asia and Africa makes its substantial contribution to social science literature by enhancing cross-cultural understanding of sport as a vital social institution, and its voluminous descriptive data will surely be a catalyst in the evolution of further theories about the interrelationship of sport and society. A source of up-to-date sociological data, Wagners superb reference will be an important resource for libraries, international studies programs, programs dealing with Asia and Africa, and physical education and sociology courses that examine sport in a comparative perspective.

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