A CULTURAL HISTORY OF SPORT

VOLUME 1

A Cultural History of Sport
General Editors: Wray Vamplew and John McClelland

Volume 1
A Cultural History of Sport in Antiquity
Edited by Paul Christesen and Charles Stocking

Volume 2
A Cultural History of Sport in the Medieval Age
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A CULTURAL HISTORY OF SPORT

IN ANTIQUITY

Edited by Paul Christesen and Charles Stocking

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CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 8

SERIES PREFACE

A Cultural History of Sport is a six-volume series reviewing the evolution of both the internal practices of sport from remote Antiquity to the present and the ways and degrees to which sport has reflected—and been integrated into—contemporary cultural criteria. All of the volumes are constructed in the same pattern, with an initial chapter outlining the purposes of sport during the time frame to which the volume is devoted. Seven chapters, each written by a specialist of the period, then deal in turn with time and space, equipment and technology, rules and order, conflict and accommodation, inclusion and segregation, athletes and identities, and representation. The reader therefore has the choice between synchronic and diachronic approaches, between concentrating on the diverse facets of sport in a single historical period, and exploring one or more of those facets as they evolved over time and became concretized in the practices and relations of the twenty-first century.

The six volumes cover the topic as follows:

Volume 1: A Cultural History of Sport in Antiquity (800 BCE–600 CE)
Volume 2: A Cultural History of Sport in the Middle Ages (600–1450)
Volume 3: A Cultural History of Sport in the Early Modern Period (1450–1650)
Volume 4: A Cultural History of Sport in the Age of Enlightenment (1650–1750)
Volume 5: A Cultural History of Sport in the Age of Industry (1750–1900)
Volume 6: A Cultural History of Sport in the Modern Age (1900–present)

General Editors: Mark Dyreson, John McClelland, and Wray Vamplew

CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS

The time span covered in this volume is habitually divided into the following periods (with the important caveat that scholars frequently supply slightly different dates for many of these periods):

Period	*dates*	*key events defining chronology*
Early Iron Age	c. 1100–c. 700 BCE	End of Aegean Bronze Age (c. 1100 BCE); emergence of the city-state (common on Greek mainland by c. 700 BCE)
Archaic period	c. 700–c. 480 BCE	Persian invasion of Greece (480–479 BCE)
Classical period	c. 480–323 BCE	Death of Alexander the Great (323 BCE)
Hellenistic period	323–31 BCE	Battle of Actium—Octavian defeats Mark Antony and becomes sole ruler of Rome (31 BCE)
Roman period	31 BCE–476 CE	Removal of last Roman emperor, Romulus Augusts (476 CE)

On the complications created by the current periodization of Greco-Roman antiquity, see the articles collected in Golden and Toohey 1997.

ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Austin, C. and G. Bastianini, (eds.) 2002. *Posidippi Pellaei quae supersunt omnia*. Milan: LED.
CEG	Hansen, P.A. 1983–1989. *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca, I-II*. Texte und Kommentare vols. 12, 15. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
CIG	*Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*. A four-volume corpus of Greek inscriptions and accompanying commentary published between 1825 to 1860, and later continued under the name *Inscriptiones Graecae*.
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. A continuing series of volumes, the first of which appeared in 1862, that supply texts of and commentary on Latin inscriptions from Classical antiquity. See http://cil.bbaw.de/cil_en/index_en.html.
FGrH	Jacoby, F. 1923–1958. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. 3v. in 14 vols. Berlin: Weidmann.
IAG	Moretti, L. 1953. *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche*. Rome: A. Signorelli.
I.Iasos	Blümel, W. 1985. *Die Inschriften von Iasos*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 28. Bonn: R. Habelt.
I.Didyma	Rehm, A. 1958. *Didyma, II. Die Inschriften*. Berlin: Mann Verlag.

IEG[2]	West, M.L. 1992. *Iambi et elegi graeci*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
I.Ephesos	Wankel, H., C. Börker, R. Merkelbach, H. Engelmann, D. Knibbe, R. Meric, *et al.* 1979–1984. *Die Inschriften von Ephesos*. 8v. in 7 vols. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 11–17. Bonn: R. Habelt.
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae, Berlin.* A continuing series of volumes, the first of which appeared in 1873, that supply texts of and commentary on Greek inscriptions from Classical antiquity. See http://telota.bbaw.de/ig/.
IGR	Cagnat, R., G. Lafaye, J. Toutain, and P. Jouguet. 1906–1927. *Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes*. 4 vols. Paris: E. Leroux.
I.Kaunos	Marek, C. 2006. *Die Inschriften von Kaunos*. *Vestigia. Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte* 55. Munich: C. H. Beck.
IK Sestos	Krauss, J. 1980. *Die Inschriften von Sestos und der thrakischen Chersones*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 19. Bonn: R. Habelt.
I.Magnesia	Kern, O. 1967. *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
I.Priene	von Gärtringen, H. 1906. *Inschriften von Priene*. Berlin: G. Reimer.
I.Stratonikeia	Sahin, M.C. 1981–2010. *Die Inschriften von Stratonikeia*. 3 vols. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 21, 22, 68. Bonn: R. Habelt.
Iscr. di Cos	Segre, M. 1993–2007. *Iscrizioni di Cos*. 2 vols. *Monografie della Scuola archeologica di Atene e delle missioni italiane in Oriente* 6.1–2. Rome: Bretschneider.
IvO	Dittenberger, W. and K. Purgold. 1896. *Die Inschriften von Olympia*. Olympia. Die Ergebnisse der von dem Deutschen Reich veranstalteten Ausgrabung, im *Auftrage des Königlich Preussischen Ministers der Geistlichen, Unterrichts- und Medicinal-Angelegenheiten* 5. Berlin: Asher & Co.
IvP (vol. 1-2)	Fränkel, M., E. Fabricius, and K. Schuchardt. 1890–1895. *Die Inschriften von Pergamon*. *Altertümer von Pergamon* 8.1–2. Berlin: Speaman.

IvP (vol. 3)	Habicht, C. and M. Wörrle. 1969. *Die Inschriften des Asklepieions*. *Altertümer von Pergamon* 8.3. Berlin: Speaman.
MDAI(A)	*Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts. Athenische Abteilung.* Journal published annually by the Athenian section of the German Archaeological Institute.
MW	Merkelbach, R. and M.L. West, (eds.) 1967. *Fragmenta Hesiodea*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Milet VI	Herrmann, P. 1998. *Inschriften von Milet VI.2*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
OGIS	Dittenberger, W. 1903–1905. *Orientis graeci inscriptiones selectae*. 2 vols. Leipzig: S. Hirzel.
P. Lond.	Kenyon, F.G. and H.I. Bell. 1893–1917. *Greek Papyri in the British Museum: Catalogue, with Texts*. 5 vols. London: Longmans.
***P. Mil. Vogl.* VIII 309**	Gallazzi, C. and G. Bastianini. 2001. *Posidippo di Pella. Epigrammi (P. Mil. Vogl. VIII 309)*. Milan: LED.
POxy	*Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. A continuing series of volumes, the first of which appeared in 1898, that supply texts of and commentary on Greek papyri from the site of Oxyrhynchus in Egypt. See http://www.papyrology.ox.ac.uk/POxy/.
SB	*Sammelbuch griechischen Urkunden aus Ägypten*. A series of volumes, the first of which was published in 1915, presenting text and commentary for Greek inscriptions from Egypt.
SEG	*Supplementum epigraphicum graecum.* An annual publication collecting newly published Greek inscriptions and studies on previously known documents. See https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/supplementum-epigraphicum-graecum.
Syll.[3]	Dittenberger, W. 1917–1920. *Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum*. 3 vols. Leipzig: S. Hirzel.
TAM	*Tituli Asiae Minoris.* A continuing series of volumes, the first of which appeared in 1901, that supply texts of and commentary on ancient inscriptions from Anatolia. See https://verlag.oeaw.ac.at/Reihen/Ergaenzungsbaende-zu-den-Tituli-Asiae-Minoris.

Introduction

PAUL CHRISTESEN AND CHARLES STOCKING

TERMINOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY

This volume offers a collection of essays that explore the cultural history of sport in antiquity. In introducing those essays, we would like, in our role as editors, to begin by clarifying what we mean by "antiquity." For the purposes of this volume, "antiquity" refers spatially to the areas inhabited by Greeks and Romans and temporally to the period between c. 800 BCE and c. 600 CE.

Those boundaries are, in our view, unfortunate necessities. Unfortunate in the sense that sport has been an important activity in human societies from an early date all around the globe (Blanchard 1995: 95–128), and, despite the fact that all of that activity merits and rewards careful study, much, perhaps most, of the material that could conceivably be included in a cultural history of sport in antiquity is not addressed in the essays that follow. However, in our view the writing of cultural history brings with it certain commitments and concomitant restraints. As will become apparent, we are strongly of the opinion that the primary goal of a cultural history of sport is to place sport firmly in its broader social context in the service of examining what sport meant to the people who practiced it at any given time and place and how sport contributed to the construction of other categories of thought and practice. That approach calls for studies with considerable depth and detail, and it is impossible to present in a single volume anything resembling a nuanced cultural history of sport in antiquity when "antiquity" is understood as having broad spatial and temporal boundaries.[1] Some limitations are, therefore, a necessity, and, insofar as this volume forms part of a series that focuses on sport in the Western world and that includes a separate volume on the period between 600 and 1450 CE, we have chosen a definition of antiquity that is consonant with the series as a whole.

The upper temporal boundary of c. 800 BCE could well have been pushed back further as to include sport in the Bronze Age (c. 3000–c. 1100 BCE) in the geographic regions covered in this volume. There is a considerable amount of relevant and evocative evidence, much of it from areas bordering the Aegean Sea (Rutter 2014). However, the social contexts of sport in the Aegean Bronze Age were in many ways fundamentally different than those of later periods, and hence writing the cultural history of sport in antiquity, defined as including the Bronze Age, would require more space than the present volume affords.

Even with the aforementioned spatial and temporal limitations, there are non-trivial challenges to writing a cultural history of sport in antiquity. By the end of the seventh century BCE, Greeks had dispersed across much of the coastline of the Mediterranean and Black Sea basins, and, starting in the fourth century BCE, they settled in considerable numbers in communities across much of the Middle East; by the first century CE the Roman state stretched from Britain to Mesopotamia.[2] And of course 1,400 years is a long span of time.

Moreover, the Greeks and Romans had cultural traditions that differed in profound ways, and any cultural history of sport in antiquity (as defined here) requires a high degree of sensitivity to the divergences between the practice and meaning of sport among Greeks and Romans. At the same time, the Greeks and Romans were in close contact with each other from an early date, and they were deeply aware of and mutually influenced by each other's sport, so the cultural history of sport among the Greeks and Romans cannot be neatly separated into two distinct strands.

A further challenge springs from the fact that the relevant textual and material evidence is simultaneously lacunose and voluminous.[3] Sport itself is an inherently transient phenomenon. Runners race, boxers throw blows, horses run their course. At the end of these and other sporting activities, victors may or may not be proclaimed. But if the events are not directly recorded and if they are not spoken of afterward, what remains? Even the rich array of evidence for sport in the present day captures only a small portion of our sporting activity. The evidentiary gaps for sport in antiquity are, by comparison to the modern world, large, and, in the textual sources, the execution and social import of sport are almost always assumed and seldom discussed directly. Just as the Greek poet Pindar once commented that the living human is ephemeral, the "dream of a shadow" (Pindar *Pythian* 8), so one could say the same about ancient sport itself.

At the same time, the textual and material evidence for sport in antiquity is cumulatively impressive. Due in no small part to the extremely high value that Greeks and Romans placed on sport, that subject is mentioned literally thousands of time in the extant literary sources and inscriptions. In a similar vein, the Greeks and Romans regularly invested resources in representing sport in a wide range of art forms and in creating training and competition facilities, the remains of many of which survive to the present day.

The word "cumulatively" requires emphasis because the evidence for Greek and Roman sport is widely scattered. It can be found in Homer's *Iliad*, traditionally dated to the eighth century BCE, and in Quintus of Smyrna's *Posthomerica*, written in the fourth century CE. It can be found in inscriptions from Olympia honoring athletes from the fifth century BCE and in graffiti from Pompeii in the first century CE advertising upcoming gladiatorial combats. It can be found in the gymnasium at the Greek colonial settlement at Ai Khanoum in present-day Afghanistan and in the Roman hippodrome (circus) that has been excavated in the town of Mérida in Spain. It can be found in a vase painted by the Athenian artist Sophilos in the early sixth century BCE that illustrates the funeral games of Patroklos as recounted in the *Iliad* and in a mosaic of a charioteer that decorated a dining room in a Romano-British house built in the fourth century CE in what is now the town of Rudston in East Yorkshire.

Scholars studying sport in antiquity have until recently tended to concentrate their labors on the Herculean task of locating and consolidating the relevant evidence and on using that evidence to try to reconstruct specific sporting events, sites, contests, and historical persons within the framework of broader chronological narratives. That approach—what might be called "event-oriented sport history"—was reasonable, indeed necessary, when our knowledge of ancient sport was limited.[4] Such work was required in order for historians and scholars of the ancient world to "take sport seriously,"[5] and the evidence available for the study of ancient sport is exponentially larger than it was even a few decades ago. However, most of the relevant body of evidence, which increases steadily but slowly, has now been carefully examined, and continued work on well-known sources along established lines has brought diminishing returns.

The invaluable foundational work found in the extensive scholarship on event-oriented sport history made it possible for more recent scholarship to address bigger questions about the relationship between sport and society in antiquity. We are now, for example, in a position to use what we know about the involvement of Greek colonists in the Olympics to think about how sport helped Greeks who settled overseas, in places such as Egypt or Sicily, maintain a sense of cultural identity while living far from mainland Greece (innovative works along these lines include König 2005 and the essays in Hornblower and Morgan 2007). Increasingly sophisticated scholarship is looking at the significance of Rome's varied program of entertainments—from the shows of the arena and circus to the acceptance and patronage of Greek athletics—for the ethnicity and self-representation of performers and spectators, as well as the sociopolitical dynamics of shows for elites and emperors (e.g., Beacham 1999; Fagan 2011).

This volume participates in the turn toward exploring the relationship between sport and society in antiquity, but it does so through an emphasis on the study of sport as a form of cultural history. Broadly speaking, we conceptualize cultural history as primarily concerned with the patterns of

thinking and practice that people in a given time and place use to make meaning, and how those patterns evolve over time (Trondman 2011). This is in opposition to the more traditional forms of history, such as military or political history, whose primary aim is to account for and reconstruct particular events in time. A critical underlying question throughout the essays in this volume is how sport in antiquity contributed to the shared systems and discourse of meaning, identity, and practices that ultimately comprised Greek and Roman culture. In addition, this volume aims to consider how sport contributed to changing conceptions of Greek and Roman culture over time. It is precisely this diachronic perspective that makes cultural history as a discipline unique from the synchronic treatments of culture found in anthropology and cultural studies.

One might note that there is a considerable degree of overlap between cultural history and social history. If one were forced to make a distinction (and some scholars have argued extensively for such a distinction[6]), we might say that social history focuses more on the lived experience of the past through an emphasis on individuals and their interactions with social and political institutions, while cultural history concentrates on phenomena that can be generalized as shared experiences, meanings, discourses, and practices. At the same time, cultural history tends to take institutions and practices as a product of culture whereas social history tends to take institutions and practices as given or traces their origins to specific historical events and trajectories. Hence, because sport in antiquity is not simply a cultural phenomenon but is also extensively involved in social and political institutions, our approach to the cultural history of sport will necessarily include methods and perspectives from social history.

Writing the cultural history of ancient sport ironically necessitates a return to the very origins of cultural history as a discipline. The nineteenth-century historian Jacob Burckhardt was not only largely responsible for introducing cultural history as an academic field of inquiry, but was also one of the first scholars to give sporting competition a central role in the study of ancient Greek culture in particular. In *The Greeks and Greek Civilization*, a lecture series that was published posthumously (in 1898–1902), Burckhardt writes that the task of the ancient Greek cultural historian is "to treat the history of Greek habits of thought and mental attitudes, and to seek to establish the vital forces, both constructive and destructive, that were active in Greek life" (J. Burckhardt 1998: 4). Above all other historical forces, he considered the Greek form of institutionalized competition, known as the *agōn*, to be the primary principle structuring ancient Greek culture. Nevertheless, although Burckhardt was the first to focus on sport and its relationship to a broader project of cultural rather than event-oriented history, there remain several difficulties with Burkhardt's approach that should be clarified for the sake of this volume.

First and foremost, it is clear that current approaches to cultural history are significantly different from its origins in nineteenth-century *Kulturgeschichte*.[7]

Burckhardt inherited a scholarly tradition, stretching back to Johann Winckelmann's *History of Art* (1764), that was shaped by an impulse to find a trajectory of ascent, zenith, and decay in Greek culture.[8] Winckelmann identified four stages in the development of Greek art, with ascent in the first two stages: the Older Style (placed roughly in the period from the eighth through the sixth centuries BCE) and the Elevated Style (fifth century). This is followed by zenith in the third stage (the Beautiful Style, fourth century) and decay in the fourth stage (the Imitative Style). The decay that set in after the fourth century was understood as continuing thereafter, with the result that Roman art was characterized as unoriginal and derivative.

Burckhardt's view of Greek history had a similar structure, one based largely on the German ideology of the individual.[9] Indeed, Burckhardt offered a periodized history of ancient Greek culture as follows: "Heroic kingship," "Agonal Age," "Fifth Century," "Fourth Century," and "Hellenistic Age." These phases were described in direct relationship to the formation (*Bildung*) of the self-conscious individual, and for this reason Burckhardt dubbed the "Agonal Age" from the eighth to the sixth century BCE to be the high period of Greek cultural development—precisely because the *agōn* was responsible, in his view, for the development of the individual as such. In this regard, the *agōn* served as the basis for ancient Greek exceptionalism. Regarding the "Agonal Age" Burckhardt states, "Now individuality as such emerged, and it was this development that made the Greeks a nation different from any other" (J. Burckhardt 1998: 207). Following the Archaic period, according to Burckhardt, the flourishing of Greek culture in the fifth century precipitated an eventual decline. Thus Burckhardt exclaims, "The fifth century began brilliantly for the Greeks, but ended sadly" (J. Burckhardt 1998: 214), and this was to be attributed to a decline in the "spirit of the *agōn*." As Burckhardt states regarding the fifth century: "Passing on from the Athenians to consider the Greeks in general, the first thing that demands attention is the falling off from the true spirit of the *agōn*" (J. Burckhardt 1998: 237).

Burckhardt's overall view was rightly criticized by another founding figure in the field of cultural history, Johan Huizinga. According to Huizinga, Burckhardt's own education and his historical and cultural context did not equip him "to perceive the widespread background of the social phenomenon" known as the *agōn* (Huizinga 1980: 71). For Huizinga, the idea of the *agōn* in early Greek culture is better understood as part of a far more universal phenomenon of "play" that is common to all cultures in all phases of history.[10] Indeed, for Huizinga the notion of agonism and of "play" more broadly was not simply a historical object of cultural study, but it was the idea of play itself that was constitutive of culture (Huizinga 1980).[11] According to Huizinga, therefore, the task of the cultural historian was simply to map out the particular differences in the development of cultures under the broad rubric of play.

Although Burckhardt and Huizinga's treatments of sport have been essential for introducing cultural history as a non-narrative, non-event-oriented mode of historical analysis, in our view, neither Burckhardt's idea that the Greek *agōn* was historically exceptional nor Huizinga's universalist notion of play are particularly useful for fully appreciating the constant, but ever-changing significance of sport in Greece and Rome. The impulse to identify a pattern of ascent/ zenith/ decay has had a persistently pernicious effect on the study of sport in antiquity. More specifically, there has long been a tendency to see the Greek sport as reaching an acme in the Classical period (c. 480–323 BCE), with corruption and a penchant for brutalist violence setting in thereafter and finding their natural extreme in the gladiatorial combats in Rome. For example, E.N. Gardiner, in his highly influential *Athletics of the Ancient World*, repeatedly comments on "the evils and corruption that too often degraded athletics" in the Roman period and claims that "the populace in the cities of Italy had long been brutalized by gladiatorial shows and craved an excitement which pure athletics could not give" (Gardiner 1930: 51, 49). Though this view in its strong form rarely appears overtly in recent scholarship, it continues to exert a subtle influence on research on Greek and Roman sport. However, contrary to the "rise and fall" of Greek sport proposed by Burckhardt and others, there is now good reason to believe that Greek-style competition reached its highest point of popularity and practice during the Roman era.[12]

Huizinga's understanding of play as a universal phenomenon with specific manifestations within particular cultures has different but no less serious difficulties because it tends to obscure the degree to which the practice and meaning of sport evolves over the course of time *within* specific cultures and the extent to which sport is, within the bounds of any given culture, a site of conflict and contestation over norms and ideals. Following Huizinga, one could certainly be tempted to perform an analysis of typological differences between Greek and Roman sporting competitions. But one must be careful to not map such cultural differences onto a diachronic trajectory that moves from Greece to Rome. Ultimately, presentation of strict categorical difference in cultural practices between Greece and Rome does not speak to the cultural historical realities of Greek- and Roman-style sports, which were often practiced simultaneously in the same geographic regions of the Mediterranean over significant periods of time.

Overall, this volume aims to be true to the origins of the study of ancient sport in cultural history as established by Burckhardt and Huizinga, while simultaneously taking into consideration the major developments in cultural history since then. Above all else, the main difference between the earliest treatments of the cultural history of sport and that of this volume has to do with the treatment of evidence. As already mentioned, the nature of the evidence for sport remains one of the largest difficulties for the ancient historian, but the

scholarly work done in the last half-century has opened up new interpretive horizons.

First and foremost, this volume gives pride of place to the historical and cultural context of the evidence. Just as an archaeologist must pay careful attention to the find context of any artifact that is excavated, so the cultural historian must pay equal attention to the "find context" of both textual and material objects of study. For instance, Burckhardt acknowledged that much of his evidence for reconstructing the "Agonal Age" of Archaic Greece actually came from the Roman Imperial period. Yet he consciously chose to ignore this fact in favor of his own historical scheme.[13] Rather than simply consider the content of sources for Greek and Roman sport, this volume pays attention more precisely to the actual context of what is being said and when. For example, contrary to Burckhardt, authors in this volume consider how and why certain topics of Greek-style sport are being addressed by Roman-era authors and to what end. By paying attention to the context of the relevant evidence, new patterns and trends in the history of sport will emerge that dramatically differ from the old "rise and fall" trajectory of sport and culture in antiquity.

Indeed, a contextually-oriented cultural history means that a continuous narrative for certain topics is simply not feasible. But perhaps the historical discontinuity that emerges from a focus on the evidence should be embraced. Such discontinuity can be seen in evidence for the issues of technology and practice (see Chapter 3), for rules of sport (see Chapter 4), and even with regard to issues of conflict and accommodation in sport (see Chapter 5). The fact remains that evidence for certain topics makes an evenly distributed historical narrative impossible, but that impossibility exposes our own impossible desire for a history of sport as a "continuous history." As Michel Foucault has claimed regarding the problem of history more generally:

> The problem is no longer one of tradition, of tracing a line, but one of division, of limits; it is no longer one of lasting foundations, but one of transformations that serve as new foundations, the rebuilding of foundations.
>
> —Foucault 1977: 5

Sometimes, it is true that the ancient themselves insist upon foundations and seemingly linear trajectories of a common tradition (see Chapter 8), but that does not mean that historians should adopt those ancient tendencies in their own analytic practices. Ultimately, the impossibility of creating a continuous history of ancient sport undermines any attempt to make sport in antiquity serve as an "origin" or "foundation" for the history of sport writ large. Although this volume is labeled as the first in a series on the cultural history of sport, we make no presumptions that the volume's diachronic priority should convey any type of vertical priority in a value hierarchy.

In addition, this volume makes use of the evidence of ancient sport not in order to reconstruct the *realia* of sport, but to reconstruct how sport itself operated as a social construct—one that in turn contributed to the construction of other categories of thought and practice in Greece and Rome. Thus, chapters are dedicated to how the practice and discussion of sport contributed to notions of religiosity and the "sacred" (see Chapter 2), to issues of social identity, status and ethnicity (see Chapter 6), and to how the material and non-material aspects of the body itself was represented and understood in different periods of antiquity (see Chapters 7 and 8). In this regard, sport is understood as an object of social discourse and representation in antiquity that is continuously changing throughout Greek and Roman history. This volume thus describes, as thickly as possible, how the discourse and representation of sport in different phases changes, develops, and responds to earlier phases and other cultural practices.

Finally, this volume does adhere to a basic tenet presented in Burckhardt and Huizinga that sees sport not merely as a supplement of culture, but as a practice that is constitutive of it. Of course, such a presupposition presents us with the eternal problem of how and what "culture" means. To be sure, both Burkhardt and Huizinga operated with a German notion of *Kultur* that is vastly different from the notions of "culture" in operation today, especially after the "cultural turn" in the humanities and social sciences during the twentieth century. Yet, in hindsight, what the cultural turn ultimately revealed is a refusal to adhere to any single narrowly defined notion of "culture."[14] As the cultural anthropologist James Clifford commented, "Culture is a deeply problematic concept I cannot yet do without" (Clifford 1988: 10). One could just as easily say the same thing about the very notion of "sport." While efforts have been made to understand "sport" from both Greek and Roman perspectives (see Chapter 1), the volume as a whole ultimately shows how the modes of thought and forms of practice that are generally categorized under the topic of "sport" are also undergoing change throughout antiquity.

BACKGROUND: SPORT IN GREECE

While we are strong advocates for employing cultural-historical approaches to the study of sport in antiquity, we also are cognizant of the continuing value of "event-oriented sport history." It is in fact impossible to undertake the former without a firm understanding of the latter. In no small part this is because Greek and Roman authors assumed that their readers were familiar with the basic parameters of the sports to which they referred and hence felt no need to explain how those sports were played, any more than a modern commentator on a basketball game would feel obliged to explain the basic rules of that game. Rather than ask the contributors to this volume to provide the requisite event-oriented background in each essay, which would have created a great deal of

repetition and compromised contributors' capacity to focus on writing cultural history, we provide as part of the introduction to the volume a brief event-oriented history of Greek and Roman sport.

At the beginning of the period under consideration here, the primary venue for competitive sport among the Greeks seems to have been games held at the funerals of prominent persons.[15] Although there is some physical evidence for such games in the form of inscribed bronze cauldrons given out as prizes, by far the fullest and most informative source for funeral games can be found in Homer's *Iliad*, which is traditionally dated to the second half of the eighth century BCE and which includes a detailed account (23.262–897) of games organized by Achilles in honor of his dead friend Patroklos.[16] Eight contests (chariot-racing, boxing, wrestling, footrace, armed combat to first blood, weight throw, archery, and javelin) are held, and valuable prizes are given to multiple competitors in each competition. A passage from another section of the *Iliad* (22.158–64) suggests that less elaborate games with humbler prizes were also held, perhaps in association with recurring religious festivals. In Homer's *Odyssey* the sons of elite families in the community of Phaiakia organize athletic contests and a dance display in order to entertain the visiting Odysseus (no prizes are given; *Odyssey* 8.97–255). That same work makes passing references to adult elite males casually throwing the discus and javelin prior to dining (4.625–7, 17.167–9). Although the use of the Homeric poems as a historical source remains the subject of lively scholarly discussion, it seems likely that they reflect (and certainly refract) the realities of sport in Greece in the ninth and eighth centuries BCE. Athletic contests may well have formed part of initiation rites in some communities at this early period, as they surely did later (Scanlon 2002: 64–120), but there is no positive evidence to prove that was the case.

Over the course of time, religious festivals emerged as the key context for holding athletic competitions (Murray 2014: 313–15). The best-known and most important festival that included athletic competitions was the Olympics, which were held at the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios at the site of Olympia in the northwestern Peloponnese.[17] The site of Olympia has been excavated extensively (Senff 2017), and the Greeks wrote at length about the Olympics; among other things they kept detailed lists of Olympic victors, some of which are extant (Christesen 2007). In the interests of brevity, the remainder of the discussion of Greek sport offered here will concentrate on the Olympics, primarily because the events held there were widely practiced throughout the Greek world. It is, however, important to bear in mind that there was a considerable degree of variation in local sport practices. As Jason König writes, "Underlying the shared, Mediterranean-wide athletic practice was a vast range of different local cultures, each with its own priorities and its own debates" (König 2010: 8). Furthermore, while female competitors (and possibly spectators) were

rigorously excluded from the Olympics, and were in general given few opportunities to participate in sport (Kyle 2014b), some initiation rites for females did include athletic contests (Scanlon 2002: 98–120, 39–74), and females in the city of Sparta trained and competed in running and wrestling (Christesen 2018: 554–60).

The Olympics were held every fourth year during the second full moon after the summer solstice (and hence in the late summer) (S. Miller 1975). Although it is common to cite 776 BCE as the starting date for the ancient Olympics, that date was disputed even in antiquity, and skepticism about its accuracy has been reinforced by modern scholarship. Moreover, the archaeological evidence from Olympia points to a major increase of activity in the sanctuary around 700; if there were athletic contests at Olympia prior to that time they were strictly local affairs with little wider importance (Christesen 2007: 146–60).

The site of Olympia lay within the territory of the city-state of Elis, and the Olympics were administered by Eleian officials. Prior to the start of each Olympics, the Eleians dispatched heralds (*spondophoroi*) who visited Greek communities in order to proclaim a "sacred truce" (*ekecheiria*). Although the *ekecheiria* has frequently been described in modern scholarship as instituting a general cessation of hostilities throughout the Greek world, that was definitely not the case. The *ekecheiria* only guaranteed safe passage for athletes and spectators traveling to and from the Games and prohibited the entry of armed forces into the territory of Elis during the Olympics (and even the latter provision was violated on occasion) (Lämmer 2010).

The ancient Olympics differed from their modern counterparts in a number of ways, among which is the absence of anything like national teams. Athletes decided as individuals whether they wished to try to compete in the Olympics, and those individuals who did so made an appearance at the city of Elis (about 35 kilometers northwest of Olympia) a month prior to the start of the Games in order to be vetted by Eleian officials (Crowther 1996). Regardless of one's athletic talents, participation in the Olympics was limited to free Greek males: females, non-Greeks, and slaves were excluded (Mann 2014b). As Mark Golden has pointed out, the Olympics reflected and reified hierarchical dualities that were basic to Greek society: Greek/non-Greek, male/female, free/slave (Golden 1998). The athletes who were given clearance to compete were sorted into two age groups: boys (roughly 12–17 years old) and men (roughly 18 years and up) (Petermandl 2014: 241–3).

Up through the middle of the seventh century BCE, most competitors (and presumably spectators) came from the immediate vicinity of Elis, but after that time the Olympics drew in Greeks from a progressively broader area (Morgan 1990: 26–105; Ulf 1997b). In the middle of the fifth century BCE, the Eleians built a new stadium at Olympia that held c. 40,000 spectators (Schilbach 1992), which likely gives some sense of the number of spectators who were in

attendance at the Games. The Olympics were a key opportunity for Greeks from widely scattered communities to gather together at a single place at a single point in time and engage in activities—primarily sport and religious worship—that helped construct a sense of shared ethnic identity. In that sense, the Olympics were Panhellenic (literally "all Greeks"), though that did not mean that rivalry and ill-feelings were absent. Quite the contrary, Greek communities erected at Olympia hundreds of monuments to celebrate military victories, many of which involved defeating other Greek communities (Scott 2010: 256–64; T. H. Nielsen 2014).

The program of competitions evolved over the course of time (Lee 2001), and information about what changes were made when can be found in work by a number of Greek and Roman authors, most notably the travel writer Pausanias (5.8.5–9.2), who visited Olympia in the second century CE. The accuracy of the information those authors provide about the events held at Olympia prior to the sixth century BCE is open to question, but it is likely to be correct for later periods (see table below; Christesen 2007: 16–17, 66, 476–8). It is unclear how many days the Olympics occupied in their early form; by the mid-fifth century they took five days, with the literal and figurative center point of the Games being a massive sacrifice of cattle to Zeus Olympios on the third day.

Changes to the Program of Events at the Ancient Olympic Games

Event(s) (name in Greek)	*Year Added to Olympic Program*
c. 200 meter sprint (*stadion*)	776
c. 400 meter run (*diaulos*)	724
distance footrace (*dolichos*)	720
pentathlon, wrestling (*palē*)	708
boxing (*pyx*/*pygmachia*/*pygmē*)	688
four-horse chariot-race (*tethrippon*)	680
all-in wrestling (*pankration*), horseback race (*kelēs*)	648
boys' *stadion*, boys' wrestling	632
boys' pentathlon (discontinued immediately thereafter)	628
boys' boxing	616
c. 400 meter run in armor (*hoplitēs*/*hoplitodromos*)	520
mule-cart race (*apēnē*)	500
horseback race for mares (*kalpē*)	496
apēnē and *kalpē* discontinued	444
two-horse chariot-race (*synoris*)	408
contests for heralds and trumpeters	396
four-colt chariot-race	384
two-colt chariot-race	268
horseback race for colts	256
boys' all-in wrestling (*pankration*)	200

Greeks distinguished between *gymnikoi agōnes* and *hippikoi agōnes*. *Gymnikoi agōnes* included the various footraces, the pentathlon, and combat sports such as boxing; *hippikoi agōnes* featured chariot-races and races for ridden horses. Whereas charioteers and jockeys competed fully clothed, athletes in the other contests were (at least after the seventh century BCE) nude (*gymnos*) (S. Miller 2004a: 13–14). Modern scholars have found it useful to Anglicize the relevant Greek terms and to write about gymnic and hippic contests.

One of the most popular gymnic contests was the *stadion*, a sprint that covered one length of the track. The length of Greek tracks varied from place to place, but most were in the range of 170–190 meters. Other footraces included the *diaulos* (two lengths/one lap of the track), the *hoplitodromos* (a one-lap race in which the competitors wore a helmet and carried a shield), and the *dolichos* (a longer race with the number of laps varying from site to site but typically in the range of 20–24, making the *dolichos* a race covering about 8,000 meters). There is no evidence, at Olympia or elsewhere, for longer footraces—the marathon race is a purely modern invention.[18]

The pentathlon (literally the "five competitions") was so-named because it comprised five events: discus, javelin, long jump, *stadion*, and wrestling (S. Miller 2004a: 60–74). Like the *stadion*, wrestling was also held as an independent event and formed part of a triad of combat sports: wrestling, boxing, and *pankration*. Those three competitions were called the "heavy contests," in part because there were no weight classes in ancient Greek combat sports, which meant that larger athletes tended to dominate. Also noteworthy is the absence of rounds in boxing; fighting continued uninterrupted until one contestant surrendered or was knocked out. The *pankration* was something like the modern sport of mixed martial arts in combining wrestling and boxing with few restrictions beyond a prohibition on gouging eyes and biting. The number of competitors meant that competitions in the combat sports went through multiple rounds, with victors having to make it through multiple matches in a single day.[19]

Although they do not regularly feature in modern descriptions of the ancient Olympics, the *hippikoi agōnes* were an integral part of the Games (S. Miller 2004a: 75–84). Racehorses were proverbially expensive to acquire, maintain, and train, so the hippic contests were largely the preserve of the rich. The hippic contests were very different from their gymnic counterparts in that prizes were given to the owners of the winning horses—not to the charioteer and jockey. Since owners did not have to be physically present at Olympia, females who owned horses could be and were declared Olympic victors; the first such victor was Kyniska (a member of one of the Spartan royal families) who won the four-horse chariot-race at Olympia in both 396 and 392 BCE and who erected monuments there to celebrate her victories.[20] In addition to the four-horse chariot-race, the hippic contests at Olympia eventually came to

include a two-horse chariot-race, chariot-races for teams of four and two colts, and horseback races for horses and colts. For a relatively brief period of time in the fifth century BCE, the hippic contests at Olympia included a race for mares in which riders repeatedly dismounted and remounted and a race for carts pulled by mules. The hippic contests involved considerable danger for the equestrian and human participants—collisions in the chariot-race were not uncommon (including head-on collisions since Greek hippodromes had no central divider)—and jockeys rode galloping horses without the benefit of stirrups.

During the sixth century BCE, major athletic festivals were established at other sanctuaries on the Greek mainland. Three such festivals—those at Delphi, Isthmia, and Nemea—emerged as the most prestigious athletic competitions other than the Olympics. Over the course of time, those four sets of competitions came to form what the Greeks called the "circuit" (*periodos*), and they were scheduled in such a way as to ensure that they did not overlap. Athletes boasted of winning the same event at all four games (the rough ancient equivalent of the Grand Slam in tennis). It is worth noting that, although the program of events at the other *periodos* games were modeled on that at Olympia, there were also significant divergences. For example, whereas the Olympics included only gymnic and hippic contests, the Pythian Games at Delphi and the Isthmian Games also featured musical contests (Kyle 2015: 132–46).

The *periodos* games are typically called "stephanitic" because prizes—given only to victors—consisted solely of wreaths (*stephanoi*). At Olympia, the wreath was made from branches from a sacred olive tree in the Sanctuary of Zeus. The other *periodos* games awarded wreaths made from trees and plants associated with the patron deity of the sanctuary in question (e.g. laurel at Delphi). That does not, however, mean that athletes competed solely for the (quite considerable) prestige that came with victory. It was a regular practice for victors' hometowns to provide them with significant rewards, including substantial monetary grants (Instone and Spawforth 2014).

Moreover, there were, in addition, to the stephanitic games, literally hundreds of athletic contests at which valuable prizes, such as silver cups or vases containing olive oil, were awarded. Most Greek communities held at least one such contest on a recurring basis, with the larger communities such as Athens in a position to offer richer prizes and to attract more and more talented competitors (T. H. Nielsen 2018: 11–168). There is irrefutable evidence that the talented athletes who competed at the *periodos* games also regularly competed at these local games and amassed considerable fortunes. The idea that Greek athletes were amateurs who never financially benefited from their victories is a myth created in the nineteenth century CE to justify regulations intended to exclude non-elites from emergent athletic competitions (Young 1984). Although the program of events at local games in many ways mimicked

that at Olympia and Delphi, local games had a more strongly civic orientation, and there was a great deal of variation from place to place. For example, some contests were open only to citizens of the community sponsoring the festival, and in many cases featured team competitions (which were unknown at the *periodos* games). Frequently local games included contests that reflected local interests. A boat race formed part of the Panathenaic Games at Athens, a major naval power, and something like modern-day rodeo contests were held by communities in Thessaly, a region famous for livestock breeding (Gallis 1988; Zapheiropoulou 2004).

BACKGROUND: SPORT IN ROME

Any discussion of sport in Rome must be prefaced by a consideration of what does and does not fall under the heading of sport. The key question is whether events built around staged violence (gladiatorial combats are the most obvious but not the only example) should be considered forms of sport. That question has been the subject of lively and continuing debate. Some scholars have argued that events built around staged violence fall outside the boundaries of anything that can be reasonably described as sport and that a distinction should be made between sport on one hand and spectacle on the other (with gladiatorial combats assigned to the latter category). Other scholars have pointed out that the Romans themselves made no distinction between sport and spectacle and that they perceived no categorical difference between gladiatorial combat and Greek athletic contests (which were held in Rome starting in the first century BCE); they have argued on that basis that gladiatorial combats and other forms of staged violence should be considered as forms of sport.[21] A relevant, potentially important consideration is that whereas the participants in most Greek sport competitions were free, typically high-status males, the participants in all forms of Roman sport and spectacle (if that distinction can be maintained) were either slaves or freed slaves—respectable Roman citizens played the role of spectators (Edwards 1997: 67–76).

Rose MacLean suggests in Chapter 1 of this volume that, from the perspective of cultural history, it is the perceptions of the people involved that are of primary importance and that, for the purposes of this volume at least, all forms of Roman staged violence should be considered forms of sport. We are entirely persuaded by that line of thought, though in our role as editors we did not feel it within our remit to impose that view dogmatically on all of the contributors. With that in mind, the discussion of Roman sport that follows includes gladiatorial combats and other forms of staged violence. It will also be helpful to bear in mind that we are best informed about sport in the city of Rome, which will be the focus here, but that sport took place in sites across the entire territory ruled by the Roman state. Sport outside of the city of Rome was

profoundly influenced by what took place at Rome itself, though at a much smaller scale and with considerable local variation. Finally, it is worth emphasizing that Greek-style sport continued to flourish, especially in the eastern half of the Roman empire, through the third century CE and beyond.

The inhabitants of the city of Rome from an early date staged various forms of what they called *spectacula* (singular *spectaclum*), literally "things worth seeing" (Kyle 2015: 7–9). The audience for *spectacula* included not only the humans in attendance, but also the gods, who were understood as taking an anthropomorphized pleasure in watching them. *Spectacula* were in early periods frequently staged in times of crisis, when it was considered to be particularly important to solicit the benevolence of the deities worshipped by the Romans.[22]

Spectacula took a variety of forms, among which the most important of which were chariot-races (*ludi circenses*), drama (*ludi scaenici*), gladiatorial combats (*munera*), staged animal hunts (*venationes*), staged naval battles (*naumachiae*), and Greek athletic contests (*athletae*). On some occasions, all of these forms of spectacle were held during a single, multi-day event (see, for example, Suetonius *Julius Caesar* 37–9), but under normal circumstances particular forms of *spectacula* were presented separately or in particular combinations.

One regular such combination was chariot-races and drama, which were typically held as part of public games (*ludi*). *Ludi* came into being when a high-ranking magistrate or general decided to organize a set of games, in many cases as a means of propitiating a divinity or offering thanks to the gods for a military victory. In some instances, the *ludi* in question were held just once; in other instances the *ludi* became a recurring event that was held annually. The earliest known *ludi* were held not long after the foundation of the Roman Republic (c. 509 BCE), and it is possible that they occurred prior to that time. The funds to pay for *ludi* came from both the public treasury and from the private resources of magistrates who organized them (Zaleski 2014: 591–3). The single most important *ludi*, the *ludi Romani*, were dedicated to Jupiter Optimus Maximus and became an annual event sometime in the first half of the fourth century BCE (Bernstein 1998: 51–78).

Starting in the third century BCE, as the territory under Roman control expanded rapidly, the resources available to the Roman state and Roman magistrates grew proportionally, which in turn facilitated the foundation of new *ludi*. By the end of the first century BCE, *ludi* held in the city of Rome took up well over 60 days per year, by the middle of the fourth century CE over 150 days per year (Veyne 1990: 399).

Chariot-races were the earliest and arguably the most popular form of *spectaculum* in the city of Rome.[23] The first such races in Rome were held well before the Republic came into being, and they remained a basic part of Roman

life for well over a millennium. Whereas the entries in Greek chariot-races were funded by and belonged to wealthy, private individuals, chariot-racing in Rome was organized (by the fourth century BCE at the latest) around large, highly organized collective enterprises called *factiones*. Each faction was owned by a wealthy aristocrat and run by professional managers who oversaw a staff consisting of more than 200 slaves and freedmen and a large stable of horses (Potter 2010: 308–25). Each faction had at its disposal the full array of personnel and equipment needed to enter multiple chariots into races on a regular basis. There were four primary *factiones*, which were differentiated by the color of the clothing worn by their charioteers (white, red, blue, green), and chariot-racing fans formed strong attachments to specific factions (Pliny *Epistles* 9.6). Star charioteers became famous in their own right, but those star charioteers, like modern athletes, sometimes changed teams. *Factiones* were thus similar in many respects to the professional sports clubs of the modern day. The organizers of *ludi* provided funds to *factiones* for supplying entries into chariot-races, and additional, substantial cash prizes were given to the *factio* of a winning chariot team. The charioteers themselves received palm fronds and cash awards as well as a percentage of prize money.

Various forms of theater (*ludi scaenici*) were another major component of *ludi*.[24] This form of *spectaculum* seems to have come to Rome in the fourth century BCE and evolved markedly over the course of time. Originally the performances were largely musical in nature, but by the end of the third century BCE the most popular forms of theater in Rome were adaptations of Greek tragedies and comedies (presented in Latin) and farces (*fabulae Atellanae*) featuring humorously boorish rustic characters. Shortly thereafter, other types of dramatic performances entered the Romans' theatrical repertoire, including plays based on Roman history (*fabulae praetextae*) and plays based on everyday life in Rome (*fabulae togatae*). In the first century BCE, two new forms of Roman drama emerged. One was the mime (*mimus*), in which performers acted out scenes that were frequently much more risqué than those found in earlier forms of Roman theater. (The modern meaning of mime is misleading in this instance since the actors in *mimus* spoke.) The other new form of drama was the pantomime (*pantomimus*), which involved actors staging scenes typically drawn from Greek mythology with musical accompaniment provided by an orchestra.

Although gladiatorial combats are inextricably linked with Rome in the modern imagination, they did not become part of the Roman program of *spectacula* until a relatively late date and were not a Roman invention.[25] The first such combats, which were known as *munera* (singular *munus*, meaning "duty" or "gift"), were held in Rome in 264 BCE on the occasion of the funeral of Junius Pera (Livy *Epitome* 16, Valerius Maximus *Memorable Doings and Sayings* 2.4.7). The Romans adopted this practice from another ethnic group in

Italy, either the Etruscans or the Campanians. Over the course of time the association of *munera* with funerals eroded, and they increasingly became part of *ludi* and, at the same time, the scale of fights increased noticeably. The first *munus* in Rome in 264 involved three pairs of gladiators; by the second century CE Roman emperors were staging *munera* that involved hundreds or even thousands of pairs of gladiators fighting over the course of days and weeks.

Gladiators were organized into troops (*familiae*) that bore a considerable resemblance to the *factiones* in the circus. *Familiae* were owned by wealthy, elite Romans; eventually most of them fell under the direct control of the emperor himself. The day-to-day management of a *familia* was handled by trainers called *lanistae*, who seem for the most part to have been free men of low status. The gladiators themselves, like the performers in other types of *spectacula*, were generally low-status individuals; most seem to have been prisoners of war, slaves, or criminals.[26] In some instances free men chose to fight as gladiators, primarily it seems in pursuit of financial rewards, and gladiators also enjoyed a certain status due in large part to the strong military ethos that permeated Roman society. The organizers of events such as *ludi* that included a *munus* would pay the owners of *familiae* to provide gladiators and would offer prize money. The victorious gladiators received both symbolic prizes (palm leaves, a crown) and part of the prize money (with the rest going to the owner of the *familia* to which the victorious gladiator belonged). Gladiators who entered a *familia* as a slave were in some cases manumitted, either by purchasing their freedom using accumulated prize money or as a reward for displaying exemplary skill or for extended service (Dunkle 2008: 30–40, 142–4).

Gladiatorial combats were for the most part one-on-one fights that involved combatants who were equipped with specific combinations of weapons and armor (armatures) and who had roughly the same level of skill and experience. When an individual expected to become a gladiator was brought into a *familia,* he was trained to fight with a particular armature, with each armature representing a recognizable and named type of gladiator (Junkelmann 2000a: 43–128). It seems to have been widespread practice to create particular pairings of gladiator types, in some cases involving two combatants with the same armature, in others, combatants with different armatures. In the same vein, gladiators were given a ranking based on how much and how well they had fought (Potter 2010: 341–5). The overall goal was to provide an entertaining fight with an uncertain outcome rather than an obvious mismatch that rapidly ended in the slaughter of one of the combatants.

Despite the violence inherent in *munera*, gladiatorial combats were structured, carefully supervised encounters that typically did not end with the death of either of the combatants (Dunkle 2008: 66–152). Matches were overseen by a referee (*summa rudis*) and, once under way, continued until a

combatant was dead, incapacitated, or signaled submission by raising an index finger or dropping his shield. A gladiator who had submitted was understood as having requested *missio* (release) from the combat. The decision whether or not to grant *missio* was made by the organizer (*editor*) of the *munus*, with the *editor* typically relying at least in part on the general sentiment expressed by the audience. In most cases, a gladiator who had put up a good fight was given *missio*, whereas a gladiator who had displayed a noteworthy absence of courage or skill could be denied *missio*. In the event of the latter, the gladiator who had submitted was executed on the spot. Some gladiatorial combats were held under rules that forbade in advance any *missio*, but such combats were exceptional (Potter 2010), and they were eventually banned by the emperor Augustus.

There were, in addition to *munera*, two other forms of violent spectacle in Rome: staged animal hunts (*venationes*, singular *venatio*) and staged naval battles (*naumachiae*). The first *venatio* in Rome was held in 186 BCE during a set of *ludi* held by the Roman general Marcus Fulvius Nobilior as part of celebrations of his military victories (Livy 39.22.1–4). The appeal of *venationes* lay not just in the violence involved, but also in the novelty of watching the killing of what were, to a Roman audience, exotic animals such as hippopotami and giraffes. *Venationes* could involve either combats between animals or between animals and a trained hunter (*venator*). A seemingly popular variation was to use large predators such as lions to kill condemned criminals (Epplett 2014a; Epplett 2014b).

Naumachiae were held relatively rarely because of the logistical complexities and concomitant expenses involved. The first *naumachia* in Rome was staged in 46 BCE by Julius Caesar, who built an artificial lake for the event (Suetonius *Julius Caesar* 39.4). A *naumachia* held by Augustus in 2 BCE saw 3,000 combatants fighting on dozens of ships, large and small (Augustus *Res Gestae* 23). All of the known *naumachiae* were presented as re-enactments of past naval battles, real or imagined (Coleman 1993; Dunkle 2008: 192–201).

The final form of *spectaculum* in Rome was Greek athletics. The *ludi* held by Marcus Fulvius Nobilior in 186 BCE, the occasion of the first *venatio* in Rome, also featured the first display of Greek athletic contests (what the Romans called *athletae*) in Rome.[27] Those contests seem to have included the full array of gymnic competitions held at the Olympics. Whereas *venationes* seem to have been well received and were held regularly thereafter, *athletae* do not appear to have gone over particularly well with Roman audiences. The next known *athletae* were held by Pompey in 55 BCE, and then too the reception seems to have been lukewarm (Cicero *Letters to His Friends* 7.1.3). Part of the problem was that Roman audiences likely experienced a certain level of discomfort because of the nudity of the competitors (Crowther 1980–1981).

By the first century BCE, however, *athletae* began to achieve a higher degree of popularity. It is noteworthy that Augustus, in writing an account of his

greatest achievements (a work known as the *Res Gestae*), explicitly mentions having sponsored two *athletae* in Rome and includes *athletae* (along with *munera*, *venationes*, and *naumachiae*) among the *spectacula* on which he had spent lavishly (22, summary). Later emperors, most notably Nero and Domitian, showed a particular fondness for Greek athletics. Nero founded a set of contests, the Neronia, that were closely modeled on Greek athletic festivals and that included musical, athletic, and hippic competitions (Suetonius *Nero* 12.3). A few decades later, Domitian established a similar festival, the Capitoline Games, which were held through the third century CE.

It was not until sometime in the fifth century CE that the practice of both Greek and Roman sport seems to have ceased entirely (on which see Remijsen 2015). Yet despite the end of sporting practice in Late Antiquity, it is clear that the discourse on ancient sport continued well into the modern era, a phenomenon that will no doubt appear in the subsequent volumes in this Bloomsbury series on the cultural history of sport. It was in the wake of various efforts to revive the practice of ancient Greek and Roman sport in the nineteenth century, seen most strongly with the Olympic revival, that the study of ancient sport itself also came into its own. In other words, from the nineteenth century onward, the importance attributed to the study of ancient sport continues to grow with the renewed importance placed on the practice of sport in modern society. Indeed, it could be argued from a world historical perspective that the practice of sport today has reached a level of involvement and significance that has not been paralleled since Antiquity. As sport continues to be ever more central to social and cultural life, we hope that the study of ancient sport from a cultural historical perspective may continue to serve as a useful sounding board for tackling some of the most pressing issues of the present.

NOTES

1. On the complex process of rejecting exclusionary discourses while recognizing practical limits on intellectual inquiry, see Fish 1989.
2. For a good, brief overview of Greek and Roman history, see Spawforth 2018.
3. The evidence for Greek and Roman sport is discussed in detail in the essays by Aldrete, Neils, Nicholson, Perry, Pleket, Martirosova Torlone, and Tuck in Christesen and Kyle 2014b.
4. On "event-oriented sport history" in the context of the study of ancient sport, see Kyle 2015: 1–7. For general overviews of the state of the field, see Christesen and Kyle 2014a; Toner 2014. One testament to the exponential increase in the study of ancient sport is the online bibliography published by the journal *Nikephoros*, edited by Z. Papakonstantinou and S. Remijsen: http://nikephoros.uni-mannheim.de.
5. This call to "take sport seriously" was a challenge posed to the field of American History, by the sports historians Elliot Gorn and Michael Orard (Gorn and Orard

1995). Many of Gorn and Oriard's complaints also ring true for the plight of ancient historians specializing in the study of sport even today.

6. On the interrelationship and distinctions between social and cultural history, see Hunt 1989; Fass 2003; Burke 2019, among others.
7. On Burckhardt's notion of *Kulturgeschichte*, see Gossman 2000; Hardtwig 2013. On the transition from *Kulturgeschichte* to cultural history in the Anglophone tradition, see Burke 2019.
8. A full explication of Winckelmann's theory of Greek art history is well beyond the scope of this introduction, but see, among others, Marvin 2008; North 2012; Harloe 2013.
9. The art historian E.H. Gombrich criticized Burckhardt for promoting a "Hegelian" model of Universal History in his specific interpretations, although Burckhardt himself often criticized Hegel and professed to not having read much of the philosopher (Gombrich 1979: 24–60; Hughson 2009: 6–7). A common train of thought between Hegel's philosophic history and Burckhardt's cultural history may be found in their view of the historical development or *Bildung* of the individual as such. For the history of German ideology of the individual, see Dumont 1986, Dumont 1994.
10. On competition as a subspecies of play in the Greek tradition, see Huizinga 1980: 30–1.
11. For an overview of the significance and contribution of Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* to the field of cultural history, see Jardine 2015: 84–105; Burke 2019: 1–50.
12. See especially König 2005; Newby 2005; Pleket 2014; Remijsen 2015.
13. As Burckhardt states, "It is true that the coherent statements of this attitude which survive belong to the period of the Roman Empire; but we cannot fail to recognize in Plutarch and Lucian the echo of an old Attic way of thinking for which these authors are so often our indispensable sources. The tone they use is, as we shall see, one in which ancient, widespread and universally accepted convictions are usually uttered" (J. Burckhardt 1998: 193).
14. On the "cultural turn" and its relevance to cultural history, see especially Bonnell and Hunt 1999; Hunt 1989; Burke 2019.
15. The introduction to Greek sport provided here draws heavily on Kyle 2014a. Helpful studies of Greek sport can be found in S. Miller 2004a and Kyle 2015. For ancient textual sources bearing on Greek sport, see S. Miller 2004b. For a collection of essays, providing a general overview of Greek sport, see Christesen and Kyle 2014b.
16. The earliest of the cauldrons dates to c. 700, but most are dated to the end of the seventh or early sixth century BCE. See T. Perry 2014: 56–7. On athletics in Homer, see Perry 2014 and Stocking Forthcoming.
17. For good overviews of the ancient Olympics, see S. Miller 2004a: 113–28 and Kyle 2015: 91–131 and the sources cited therein.
18. On footraces at Olympia in particular and Greek sport in general, see S. Miller 2004a: 31–46.
19. On combat sports, see Poliakoff 1987; S. Miller 2004a: 46–60.
20. On Kyniska, see Christesen 2019: 98–100 and the sources cited therein.

21. See Rose MacLean's discussion of this issue in Chapter 1 for more detail and relevant bibliography.
22. The introduction to Roman sport provided here draws heavily on Dunkle 2014. Helpful studies of Roman sport can be found in Futrell 1997 and Kyle 2015. For ancient textual sources bearing on Roman sport, see Futrell 2006. For a collection of essays providing a general overview of Roman sport, see Christesen and Kyle 2014b.
23. On chariot-racing in Rome, see Humphrey 1986; Bell 2014.
24. On Roman theater, see Boyle 2006 and Manuwald 2011 and the articles collected in McDonald 2011 and Frangoulidis, Harrison, and Manuwald 2016. For a selection of the relevant texts, see Manuwald 2010.
25. The scholarly literature on gladiatorial combats is extensive. Good starting places can be found in Junkelmann 2000a; Dunkle 2008; Fagan 2011; Fagan 2014.
26. Virtually all known gladiators were male, though women did fight as gladiators in exceptional cases (Brunet 2014).
27. On Greek athletics in Rome, see Newby 2005; Lee 2014.