

**Resenha do Livro “Sacando” o Voleibol de Wanderley Marchi Júnior**  
*Summary of The Book “Catching” the Volleyball by Wanderley Marchi Júnior*

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**RESUMO:** O livro de Wanderley Marchi Júnior, “Sacando” o Voleibol, estuda o processo de ressignificação do voleibol brasileiro, em consonância com as disposições e perspectivas da sociedade de consumo, num período circunscrito. A análise histórica da modalidade detecta transições, denominadas pelo autor de “viradas”. As “viradas” ocorreram com a passagem do amadorismo para o profissionalismo e com a espetacularização do esporte. A obra apresentada é de que as estruturas atuais do voleibol não estão perspectivando exclusivamente a criação de um contingente populacional de praticantes, e sim um emergente mercado consumidor de símbolos e signos sociais circunscritos aos capitais de uma prática esportiva distintiva.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Voleibol: Fatores socioeconômicos. Esportes: história. Resenhas de livros.

“Catching” the Volleyball, of Wanderley Marchi Júnior, is one of those studies that quickly creates some impact on the academic environment. Modeled on the writings of French Pierre Bourdieu, it is a refined sociological reading of a sport that, in a short period, was taken to the condition of the second top sport in the preference of Brazilians, second only to soccer. This transition constitutes the focus of this study.

The book is based on the idea that modern sport cannot be sufficiently understood without being considered as a social and historically determined phenomenon. With the modifications in social life imposed by the capitalism, the sport, originated in England with an aristocratic and elitist characteristic, has been metamorphosed. The new conformation, globally diffused, has been permeated by a mercantile logic.

The history of sport shows moments that translate several levels of contradictions in the daily practice of a sport. Such circumstances, which are not necessarily explicit in the proposals, but are instead diluted, were identified as disciplinary instruments of youth in the construction of a citizenship concept disguised by the nationalist spirit and civism; in the dissemination elements of the students’

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movement, forming groups and selecting a certain population contingent that would have conditions of physical performance, to the detriment of the intellectual capability, and lastly, in the current status of being profitable merchandise, profession and spectacle.

This way, volleyball has been constituted as a modern sport, founded on the creation of a game that would fulfill peculiar signs of distinct classes, masked by the idea of being an element of the integral formation in Physical Education taught at school.

By simply understanding the concept of sport as a physical activity in constant progress, founded on a sociocultural perspective and in continuous process of maturation and re-signification, the book of Marchi Júnior, considering such lines of concerns, causes the reader to question the perspectives established by the broad spectrum of approaches to the sport phenomenon. Published by Hucitec and launched at the 9<sup>th</sup> Congress on the History of Sport, Leisure and Physical Education, the book is the result of the author's doctor's degree study submitted to the School of Physical Education at Unicamp. In the book, Marchi Júnior established a model of analysis in his initial investigations, screened by empiric evidences that today volleyball and most sports that have been spectacularized are perhaps not being managed to encourage new players and make participation and learning viable, according to the objectives described in projects and proposals; but otherwise, that volleyball has progressed in both the privilege condition of its practical universe and the specific capital required for the viewer's consumption and insertion.

When telling his own sport experience, the author tries to approach and minimally illustrate the transformation that has occurred in this sport. For this purpose, he highlights moments of ruptures and transitions in the history of this sport in Brazil, from its "romantic" or amateur phase to its condition of spectacularized product, which characterized the period between the 1970s and the 1990s.

Considering a theoretical and methodological explanation, Marchi Júnior performed a historical and descriptive investigation of volleyball, relating it to a process of sociological analysis, where the players and the social structures are just presumed or are not according to the description.

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Divided into three chapters, the study discusses in the first chapter “For the Sport Field Analysis” the restoration of possible configurations of the modern sport sociology. For this purpose, the author shows the main theoretical readings, pointing out some authors that established traces identifying the phenomenon, inscribing possible theorizations or incursions of such readings into his narration.

Thus, for Eric Hobsbawm, in the author’s analysis, associating the history of sports with the development of bourgeoisie in England is fundamental, especially because it considers the hegemony of this nation in several sectors. Allen Guttman postulates the need for understanding sports through anthropological and cultural matrixes of the game, associating the sport profile with modernity mechanisms and points out that a new form of organization is provided, different from those models stipulated in Ancient Times and Middle Ages. Bourdieu states that the manifestations comprising the sport phenomenon occupy a space of social practices referred to as field, in which positions that are compatible with the social, economic and cultural capital of each member are attributed. Preliminarily and according to the analysis parameters of Norbert Elias, the emergence of modern sport occurred as a result of its association with the Western civilization process that unchained a series of changes in the society habits, originally attributions of higher social classes; however, from mid 19<sup>th</sup> century towards, sports would start being practiced by the middle and worker classes. After that, Marchi Júnior goes deep in a theoretical and methodological analysis, justifying its relevance and the reasons of his analysis method. Still in this chapter, he details the main concepts of Bourdieu’s sociological analysis, as well as the competitive game theory and some fundamental categories of the elysian theory.

The second chapter “Delimitating the Sport Field: the Volleyball” shows the initial historical context of volleyball, identifying the sport invention, i.e., the characterization of its historical conditions, as well as its expansion ways and international diffusion. The author emphasizes the creation of institutional and legal organizations that support the sport in terms of management. Based on the group of observations presented, the history of volleyball shows that it followed a path deviating from the Eurocentric exclusiveness in the creation of leisure games and cultural practices. In this sense, the study questions whether the differentiated origin of volleyball would have offered a built-in system of dispositions that boosted a new sport social field. In addition, what would be the logic of the social relations determined in

the development of this sport. The second part of this chapter shows the international expansion of volleyball and its insertion in Brazil, highlighting places and people, and characterizing this period as the amateur phase of the sport, identified as the “romantic” phase of the Brazilian volleyball.

The third chapter “From All Latex to Asics Tiger: the re-signification process of Volleyball” describes the attempt to move on from the amateur version of volleyball into the professionalization and modernization of the sport in Brazil. In this phase, the main interrelations established in the sport field are pointed out, as well as the incursion of companies and media into the sport. A group of these interrelations explains the “first upturn” in the Brazilian volleyball. Then, the course of professionalization and relations with the media enabled a strong progress of the sport by offering conditions of technical development and popular acceptance. These conditions would be the result of investments made by companies and the utilization of sport marketing; however, managers, coaches and athletes did not show to be adequately prepared for this “upturn”; and this way, Marchi Júnior takes us to the volleyball structure scenario in the 1980s, with the first signs of a new structure, such as the development of the Brazilian model of volleyball management; the creation of the first dedicated sport associations; the process of sponsorship granted by companies to the volleyball teams; well, the progressive representation of volleyball which, at first, was due to the interrelation involving company, market and sport. In this perspective, the next topic “The Volleyball Spectacularization Dimensions in the 1990s” presents the central discussion on how, during all this phase, the “second upturn” in volleyball was outlined and the consequences from this transition up to late 2000.

In the last part of his book, Marchi Júnior clarifies the conclusions of his study, presenting the distinctive position of volleyball and probable possibilities based on trends towards future relations, interdependences and effects on the sport field, which, according to the author, will start the probable “third upturn”, where the Brazilian volleyball will be inserted.

If sociology as knowledge cannot dismiss imagination, it similarly cannot dispel the analysis. From this well-balanced combination of speculations or suppositions based on trends, Marchi Júnior favors a key moment of today’s Brazilian volleyball, which seeks to establish a sport management model aiming at the incorporation of modern concepts of market economy, in order to enhance the signs of a new participative and/or

interactive trend of the sport. With this explanation, the author, through a historical and descriptive study of about three recent decades, takes us to a volleyball reading, concerning its transitional process, characterized by the change from the amateur to the professional, and later the sport spectacularization. From some well explored strategies, the author makes past events look like present facts to the reader.

This way, through sociology and focused on corporal practices, Marchi Júnior produces an original reading of the investigated processes. This is the design of a book that is worth reading.

#### **Summary of The Book “Catching” the Volleyball by Wanderley Marchi Júnior**

**Abstract:** The book of Wanderley Marchi Júnior, “Catching” the Volleyball, studies the process of renaming the Brazilian Volleyball, along with the prospects and dispositions of a consumer society, in a circumscribed period. The historical analysis of this sport detects transitions, named by the author as “upturns”. The “upturns” occurred with the change from the amateur to the professional and with the sport spectacularization. The work shows the present structures of volleyball are not exclusively prioritizing the creation of a population contingent of players, but an emerging consumer market of social symbols and signs attached to the capital of a distinctive sport practice.

**Keywords:** Volleyball: socioeconomic factors. Sports: history. Book reviews.

#### **Reseña del Libro “Entendiendo” el Voley de Wanderley Marchi Júnior**

**Resumen:** El libro de Wanderley Marchi Júnior, “Entendiendo” el Voleibol, del amateurismo a la espectacularización de la modalidad en Brasil (1970-2000), estudia el proceso de resignificación del Voleibol brasileiro, en consonancia con las disposiciones y perspectivas de la sociedad de consumo, en un período circunscripto. El análisis histórico de la modalidad detecta transiciones, denominadas por el autor de “cambios”. Los “cambios” ocurrieron con el pasaje del amateurismo para el profesionalismo y con la espectacularización del deporte. El trabajo presentado es de que las estructuras actuales del Voleibol no están perfectando exclusivamente la creación de un gran contingente de practicantes, y si un emergente mercado consumidor de símbolos e signos sociales circunscriptos a los capitales de una práctica deportiva distinta.

**Palabras clave:** Voleibol: factores socioeconómicos. Deportes: historia. Reseña de libros.

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