



INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF WRESTLING RESEARCHERS (INWR)

ADVANCING OUR SPORT THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

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РАЗВИТИЕ НАШЕГО ВИДА СПОРТА ЧЕРЕЗ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ

THE WRESTLING TRADITION IN AFRICA:

From the distant past, its widespread presence today and the challenges it faces in the future.

Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, USA, from December 29-January 5th 2015

BESUA

***STYLE DE LUTTE TRADITIONNELLE AFRICAINE DE LA RÉGION DU
LITTORAL AU CAMEROUN***

***AFRICAN TRADITIONAL WRESTLING STYLE FROM THE LITTORAL
REGION OF CAMEROON***

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PLAN OF THE PRESENTATION

1/-The origins :

The legend of Malobe & Ngomninga

2 / - code of Besua Wrestling

3 / - The body positions

4 / - The match

5 / - Prospects for the future

1/- The Origins

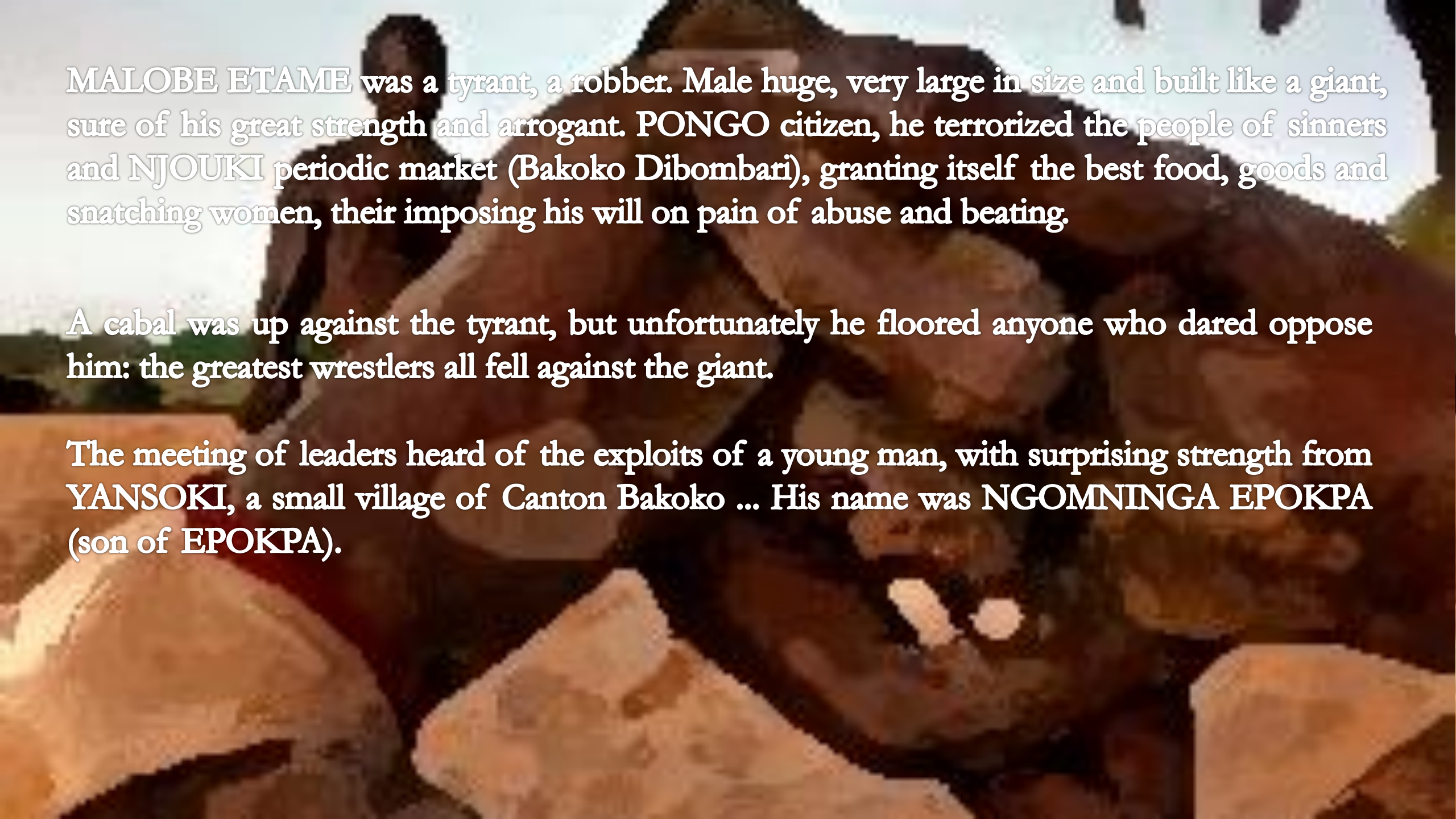
It is difficult to find the exact origins of this style of wrestling, BESSUA, BESUA, BESSWA, MASSING ... It is practiced in three regions of Cameroon: Littoral, Southwest, South (Kribi Campo); in traditional and cultural festivities (Ngondo, Mpo'o, MBOG LIA'A), bereavements or just fun in the sports setting.

The oral tradition traces its origins to the great migration of the people of the coast (SAWA); Other stories recount the history & MALOBE NGOMNINGA like the original Besua.

The background image shows a tropical beach scene. In the foreground, a person wearing a green shirt and dark pants is walking away from the camera towards the water. The beach is sandy and there are some rocks or debris on the ground. In the background, there are palm trees and a body of water under a clear sky.

Malobe and Ngomninga

Shortly before Africa opened to the West long, and before the area of the first trade and the first treaties, the Cameroon coast was populated by several ethnic groups: Bassa'a, Duala, Bakoko, Pongo, Abo 'O, Ewodi, Bankon, Bakaka, Bakweri, Bakossi, Banyague, Batanga. Great ethnic diversity ... This was the starting point of for our story. There was much conflict (sometimes armed), but a new method of resolution was discovered and adopted.



MALOBÉ ETAMÉ was a tyrant, a robber. Male huge, very large in size and built like a giant, sure of his great strength and arrogant. PONGO citizen, he terrorized the people of sinners and NJOUKI periodic market (Bakoko Dibombari), granting itself the best food, goods and snatching women, their imposing his will on pain of abuse and beating.

A cabal was up against the tyrant, but unfortunately he floored anyone who dared oppose him: the greatest wrestlers all fell against the giant.

The meeting of leaders heard of the exploits of a young man, with surprising strength from YANSOKI, a small village of Canton Bakoko ... His name was NGOMNINGA EPOKPA (son of EPOKPA).

The background image is a photograph showing a person wrestling a large animal, likely a bull, in a river. The person is on the left, wearing a blue shirt, and the animal is on the right, with its head and front legs visible. The water is a deep blue color.

The leaders went to find NGOMNINGA of EPOKA, and present the situation. He agreed to wrestle MALOBE ETAME, risking his life.

To prepare, he spent nine days and nights in the village of his mother Bwan bakoko. After this return to his birthplace, he then spent nine days and nine nights to train in his YANSOKI village.

Following this training he had the ultimate test, uprooting a particular shrub, where water deities, or spirits nested (BISSIMA). These shrubs grow in the middle of the river, and NGOMNINGA requested their blessings. We are at a time when the mystic-religious beliefs were very real, and when NGOMNINGA was allowed to uproot the plants, this was a signal from the spirits that he was blessed with special strength and power. It could be said of him that he had the approval and force of water spirits: the "Jengu".

NG OMNINGA nor EPOKA YANSOKI left the village, and after a journey of three days, arrived at NJOUKI. There waited MALOBE ETAME, which as usual, would take his tribe on market day.

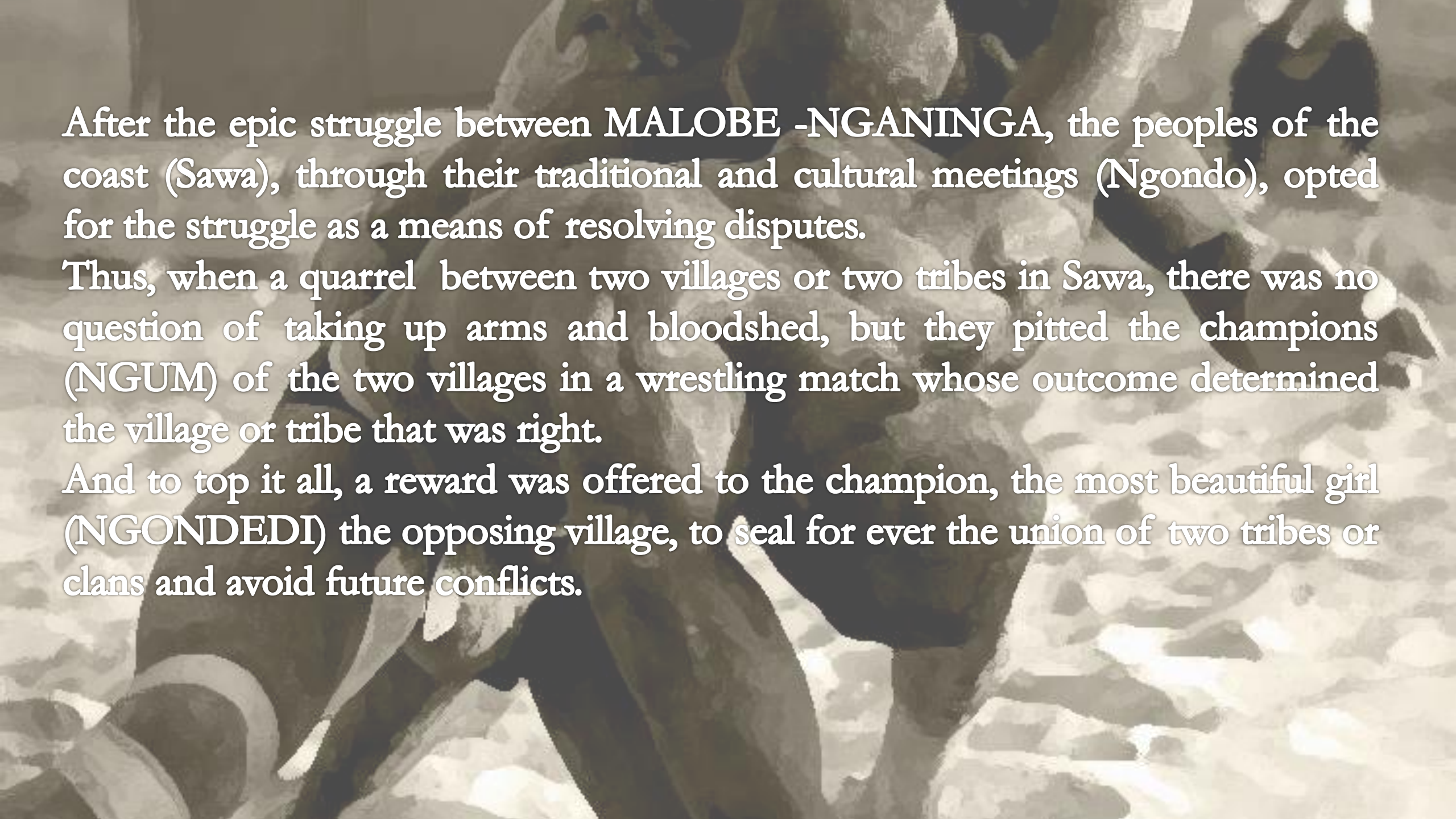
Upon his arrival, MALOBE found that all the villagers had taken refuge in their huts leaving all the best products of fishing and agriculture for him MALOBE, has to choose her. No surprise, but he also noted the presence of a young man rather puny appearance, and seemed to be waiting at the edge of the water ...

He went to NGOMNINGA, and began to question him about the reasons for his presence, without the latter response, he decided to molest him ... but he felt an extraordinary strength to oppose him, and said: YOU ARE SO NOT HERE BY CHANCE, A REAL OPPONENT FINALLY !!!



An epic battle ensued between the two men and fight lasted almost one day. NGOMNINGA remained in the water to avoid breaking his link with the spirits during his epic and dramatic struggle. The "small" Ngomninga had uprooted the giant shrub Pongo and now did the same to MALOBE.

Malobe was tied up and held by the assembly of traditional chiefs who decided not to shed blood and have him killed, but rather he was tied up and was then sold as a slave with a destination in the United States.



After the epic struggle between MALOBE -NGANINGA, the peoples of the coast (Sawa), through their traditional and cultural meetings (Ngondo), opted for the struggle as a means of resolving disputes.

Thus, when a quarrel between two villages or two tribes in Sawa, there was no question of taking up arms and bloodshed, but they pitted the champions (NGUM) of the two villages in a wrestling match whose outcome determined the village or tribe that was right.

And to top it all, a reward was offered to the champion, the most beautiful girl (NGONDEDI) the opposing village, to seal for ever the union of two tribes or clans and avoid future conflicts.

2/- Rules of Besua Wrestling

The arena: A circular within 6 9 meters in diameter, filled with fine sand, bordered by banana leaves or other foliage.

Uniform: wrestlers wear the short kilt, the colors of their cantons.

Weight categories: previously there were no weight classes, wrestlers were paired regardless of the weight of the opponent, as Malobe & Ngomninga. Recently two weight classes are used:

Kilo i sadi: Lightweight (- 75 kg)

Kilo i Ndéné: heavyweight (+ 75kg)

The duration of the fight: the time is fight is indefinite, it continues until one of the wrestlers obtains the takedown on his opponent.

Victory: techniques focus on the body of the opponent with arms and legs. Victory is achieved when the opponent is struck down, regardless of the location of the body touches the ground; thus, the tripping caught by the hands is a defeat. By contrast, in Bakweri in the South West of the country, the wrestlers adopt a very low guard and take ground support with one or both hands or knees during the approach. Victory is achieved when the opponent knocked touches the ground with the trunk or:

On the buttocks

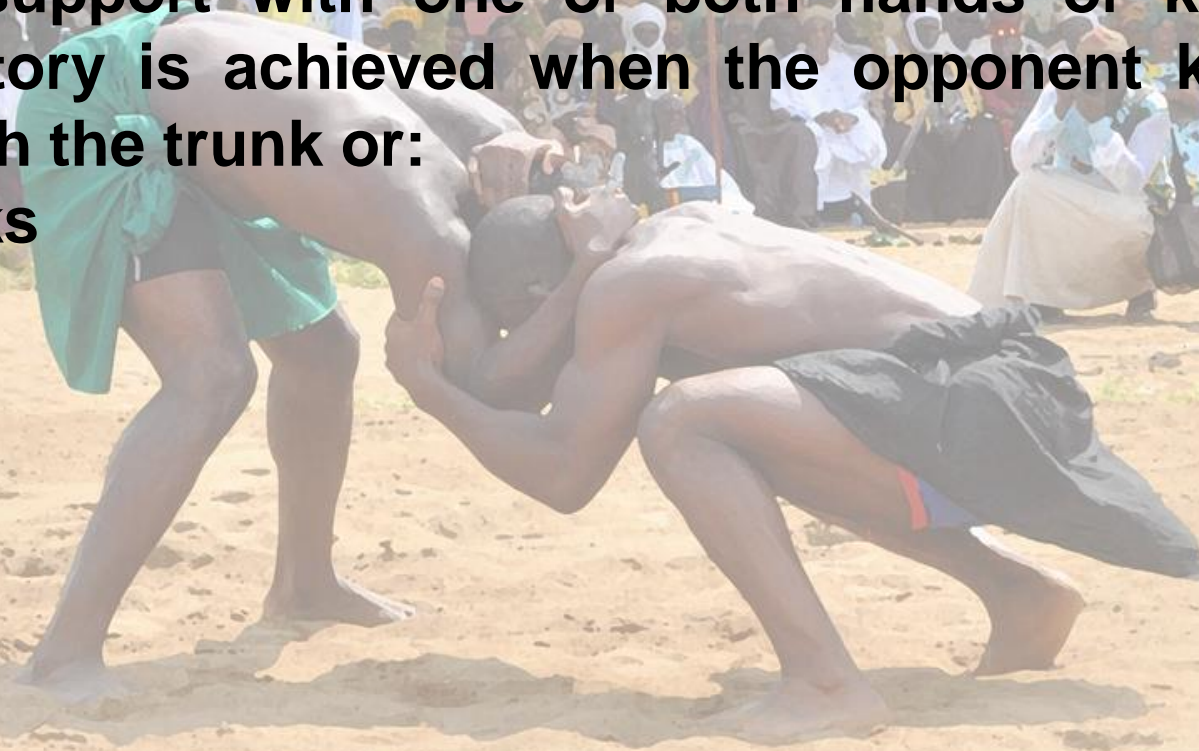
On the side

On the belly

On all fours

On both knees

On the head



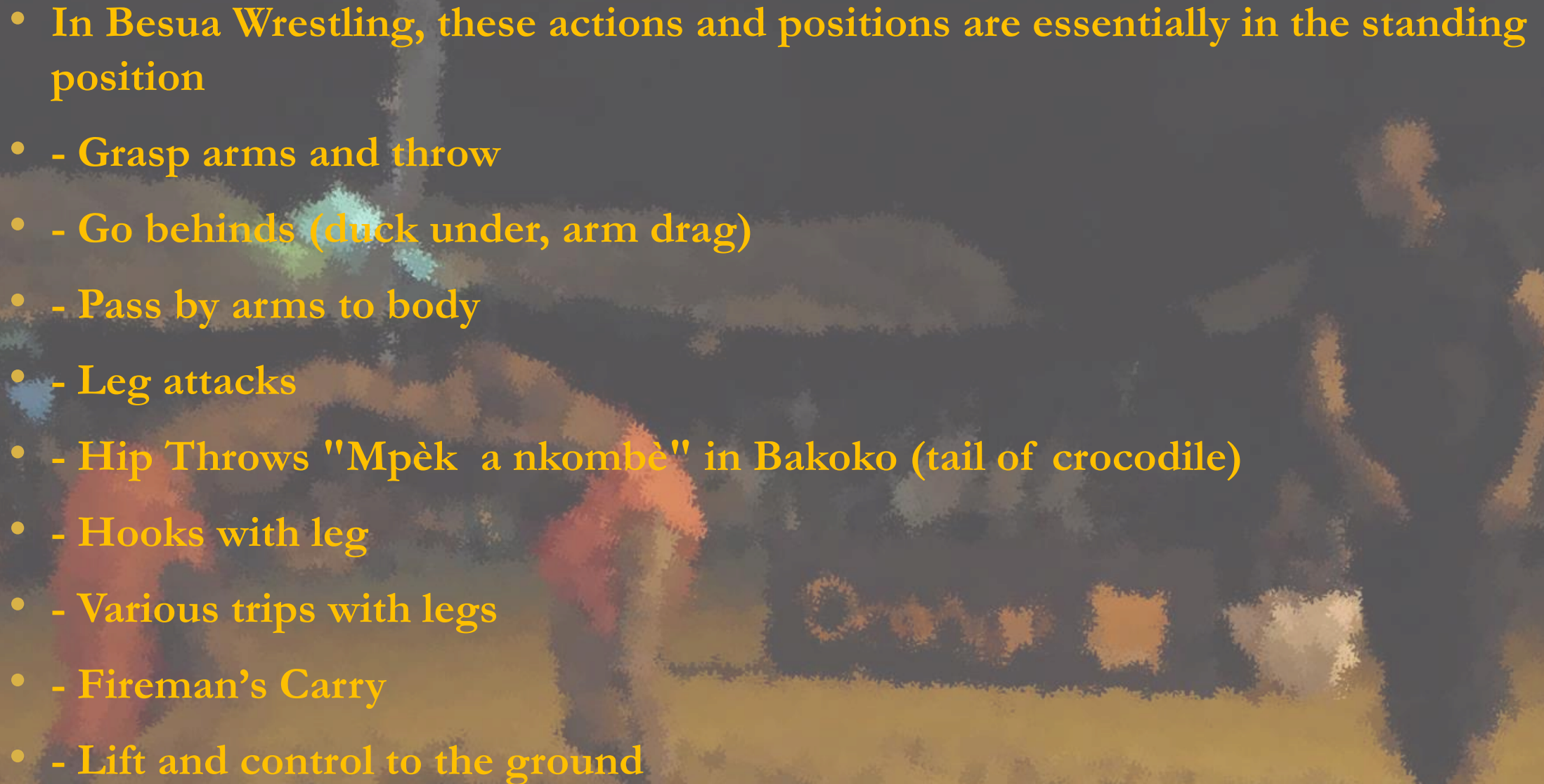
The fights are up to now reserved for only men as before, it has been thought that women should not participate in violent clashes.

It is forbidden to:

- Hit an opponent
- Grasp the loincloth of the opponent
- Make contact with the genitals
- Scratch
- Coat the body with oil
- To wear amulets

3/- Basic Positions

Control measures are used to subvert, disrupt, and take the opponent to the ground. The adversaries use a system of forces acting around the center of gravity and axis of rotation. Several fundamental actions can thus be characterized by the system forces used. Forces are applied to cause imbalance. There are actions used with basic body positions.

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- In Besua Wrestling, these actions and positions are essentially in the standing position
 - - Grasp arms and throw
 - - Go behinds (duck under, arm drag)
 - - Pass by arms to body
 - - Leg attacks
 - - Hip Throws "Mpèk a nkombè" in Bakoko (tail of crocodile)
 - - Hooks with leg
 - - Various trips with legs
 - - Fireman's Carry
 - - Lift and control to the ground

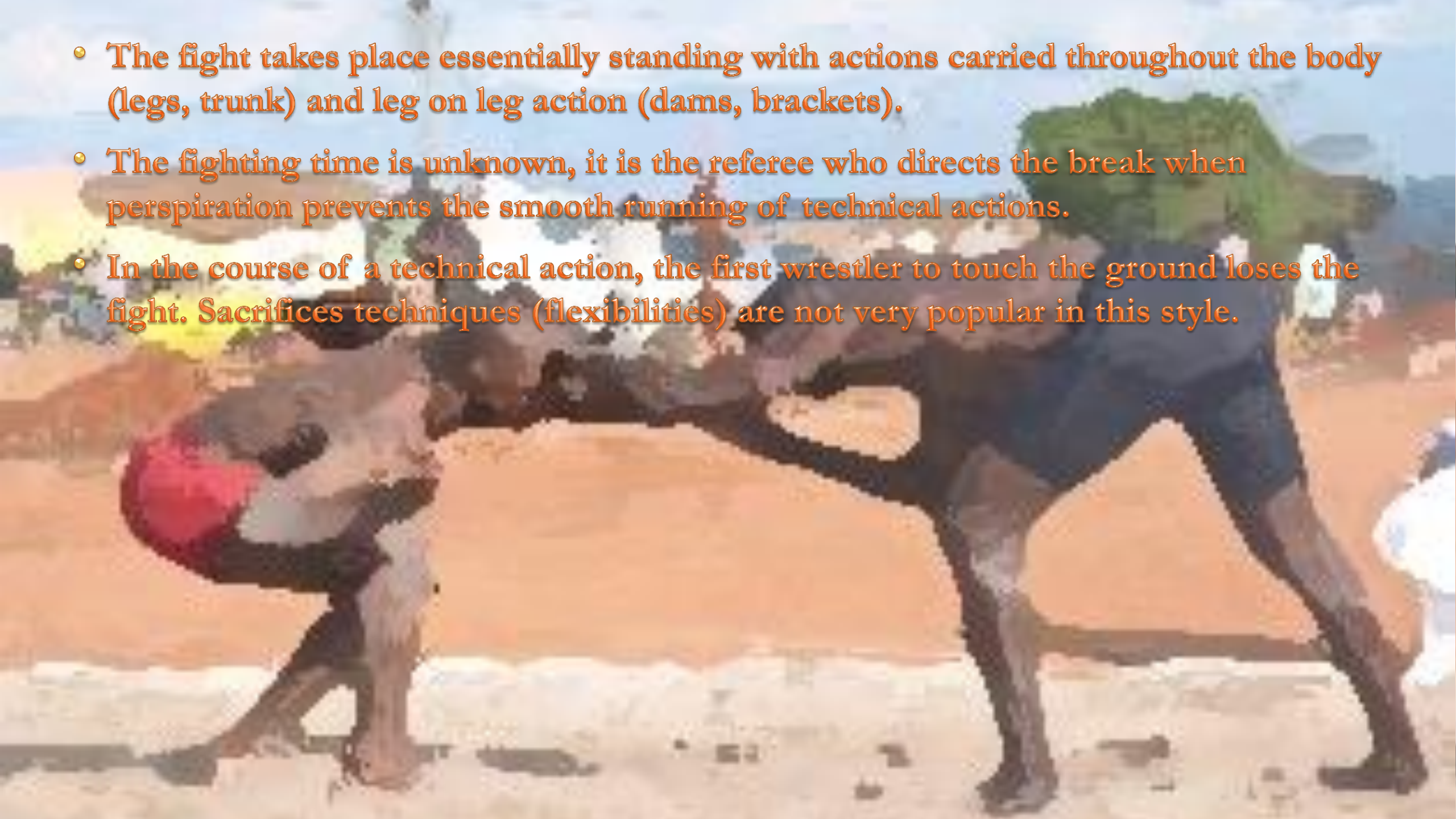
The Match

The two opponents face each other while dancing to the sound of tom-toms (BELIMBI), then everyone takes a handful of sand and tosses it in front of him in the ring as a sign of acceptance of the challenge. The referee orders them to grasp in arm and collar tie: this is the "PANGA".

Under the control of the referee, the two opponents will have to grasp and release three times, and the third tussle, the referee simultaneously gives a pat on the back to both protagonists, synonymous with the beginning of combat.



- The fight takes place essentially standing with actions carried throughout the body (legs, trunk) and leg on leg action (dams, brackets).
- The fighting time is unknown, it is the referee who directs the break when perspiration prevents the smooth running of technical actions.
- In the course of a technical action, the first wrestler to touch the ground loses the fight. Sacrifices techniques (flexibilities) are not very popular in this style.



PERSPECTIVES

As traditional wrestling, this style guarantees the transmission of cultural heritage (traditions, dances, songs, rhythms, ...) to the youth of Cameroon.

At the dawn of the fusion of cultures and various interbreeding, this style allows the opening to other wrestling styles and conversion of traditional wrestlers Olympic wrestlers (wrestling, Greco-Roman wrestling, women's wrestling), seen the basics are the same:

position,

movement,

stance and control ...

In the future, the sustainability of this style is underpinned by the following factors: The gender approach: The Besua will be open to the feminine gender.



- Coeducation youth for an educational struggle in between 8-12 years, boys and girls are almost equal strength, it is the suitable time to develop in the child certain motor skills and techniques, values and attitudes.



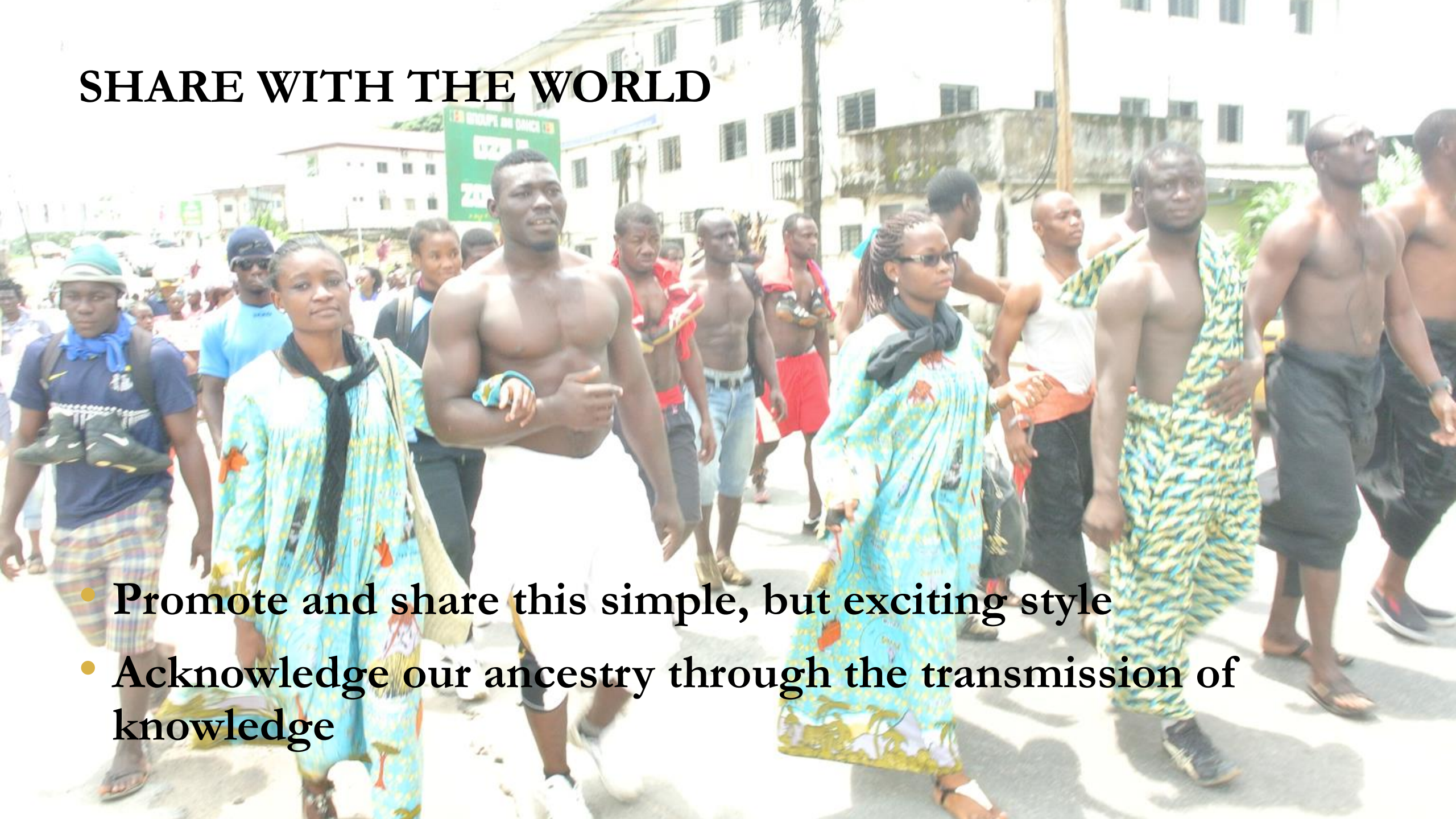
Restrict the combat time in order to prevent injury, to better manage the recovery and through this, ensure better performance.



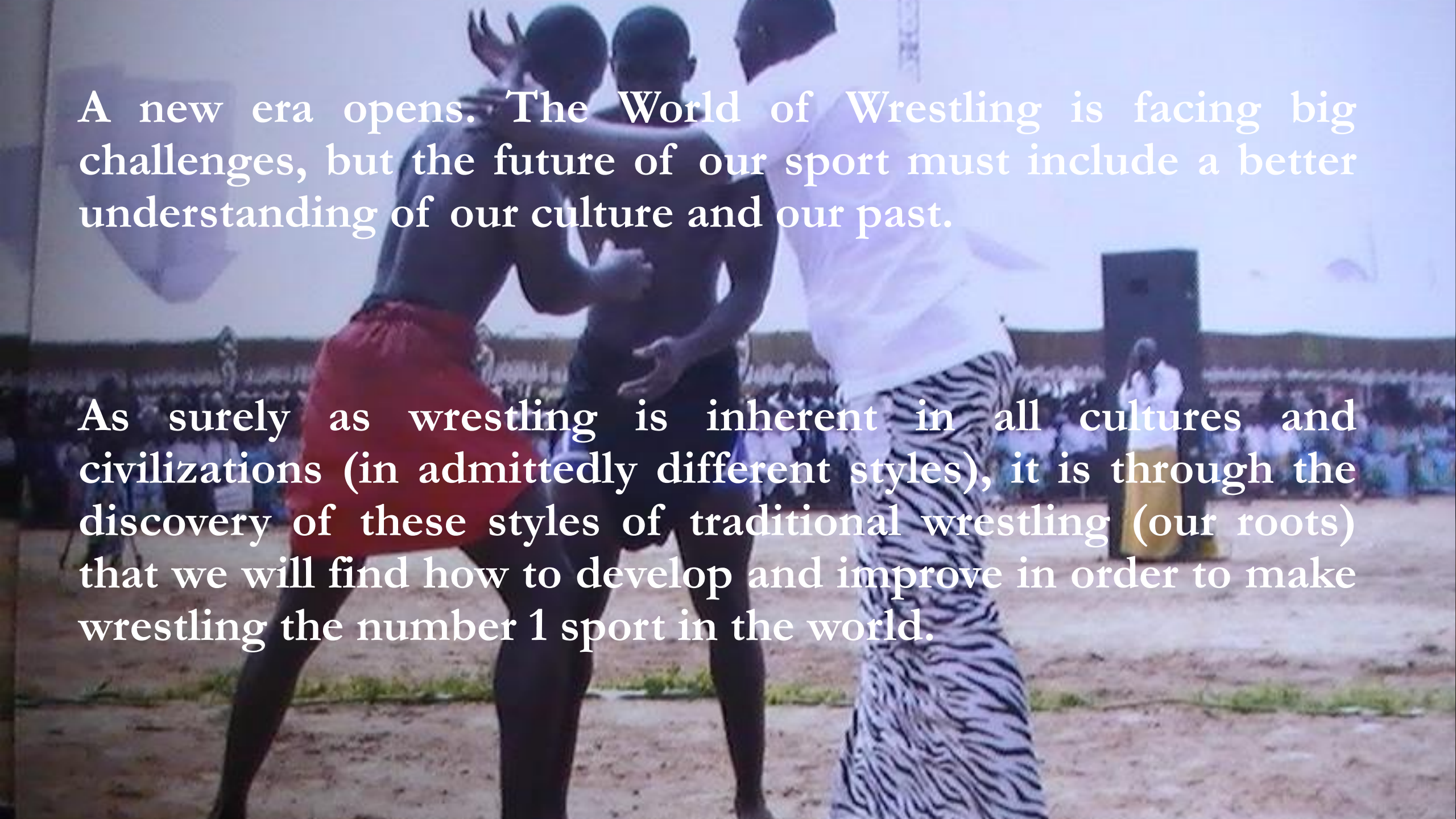
A better distribution of athletes per category: In order to have a more balanced fighting, to avoid injury.

SENIORS		JUNIORS		CADETS		SCHOOL KIDS
MEN	WOMEN	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	G/F
65	45	55	40	50	40	28
75	55	60	45	55	48	32
85	65	65	50	60	52	35
100	75	75	55	65	56	40
+100	+75	85	60	75	60	45

SHARE WITH THE WORLD



- Promote and share this simple, but exciting style
- Acknowledge our ancestry through the transmission of knowledge



A new era opens. The World of Wrestling is facing big challenges, but the future of our sport must include a better understanding of our culture and our past.

As surely as wrestling is inherent in all cultures and civilizations (in admittedly different styles), it is through the discovery of these styles of traditional wrestling (our roots) that we will find how to develop and improve in order to make wrestling the number 1 sport in the world.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION



A photograph of a man in a dark loincloth performing a traditional dance with his arms raised high. He is in the foreground, slightly to the right. Behind him, a large group of people, mostly men, are seated on white plastic chairs under a large white tent. The setting appears to be outdoors on a dirt ground. The text is overlaid on the image.

Particular thank's to:

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