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## Cultural potential of motion games and activities

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Potencjał kulturowy gier i zabaw ruchowych

**Abstrakt:** Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie koncepcji potencjału kulturowego składników kultury fizycznej, czyli sportu, rekreacji, rehabilitacji i wychowania fizycznego, oraz podkreślenie szeroko pojętej aktywności fizycznej i jej roli w kształtowaniu postaw, a także zachowań. Ze względu na wielowątkowy i wieloaspektowy charakter zagadnienia autorzy zastosowali metodę historyczną, polegającą na analizie i interpretacji istniejących źródeł oraz literatury. Biorąc pod uwagę fakt, że od czasów starożytnych do współczesności wkład aktywności fizycznej w kulturę jest niezaprzeczalny, musi być odpowiednio wspierany, aby mógł zaistnieć. Złożoność koncepcji oznacza, że nie można jej podsumować za pomocą pojedynczego wskaźnika, a ograniczone ramy artykułu wymagają od autorów skupienia się na wybranych elementach obecnych w świadomości i próbach ich identyfikacji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** wychowanie fizyczne, rekreacja, sport, aktywność fizyczna, kultura fizyczna

**Abstract:** The aim of the article is to present the concept of cultural potential of physical culture components, i.e. sport, recreation, rehabilitation and physical education, and to emphasize broadly understood physical activity and its role in shaping attitudes and behaviors. Due to the multi-threaded and multifaceted nature of the issue, the authors used the historical method, consisting in the analysis and interpretation of existing sources and literature. Taking into account the fact that from the ancient times to the contemporary, contribution of physical activity in culture has been undeniable, it must be properly supported in order to exist. The complexity of the concept means that it is impossible to summarize it with a single indicator, and the limited framework of the article requires the authors to concentrate on selected elements present in the consciousness and attempt to identify them.

**Keywords:** physical education, recreation, sport, physical activity, physical culture

## INTRODUCTION

The idea of competition has always been at the heart of social life. Human culture was created and developed during the play and as fun. Johan Huizinga (1985) in *Homo Ludens* has broadly described his thoughts on this topic. The term ‘motion games and plays’ is in this paper a certain symbol of physical activity, undertaken at various levels of body preparation and by various people: from amateurs to professionals, from children through adults to seniors. Both sport and physical recreation are elements of physical culture that contains a very rich range of values. Participation readiness, needs, competences or institutions are a cultural heritage that is created by the action of individuals, groups and institutions at various levels of a social life.

The multidimensionality of cultural potential and its openness constitute a large material for analysis. It is a constantly interpreted and dynamically changing area of human heritage as a result of the occurrence of various processes. This space is filled with material and immaterial values, including beliefs, attitudes, views, needs, competences or emotions – individual and groups of people, often with strong influence of the elite (Sztumski 2007). Inherited and culturally enhanced norms, values and behavioral patterns are an extremely important segment of cultural potential. At the same time, the sense of national, regional and local identity is an important link. The aim of the article is to present the concept of cultural potential of elements of physical culture: sport, recreation, rehabilitation and physical education as well as the role of physical culture in creating human attitudes and behaviors. Due to the multithreaded and multifaceted nature of the issue, the authors applied a historical method based on the analysis and interpretation of existing sources and literature.

## ANCIENT VALUES

The Greek ideal of upbringing, which took shape in ancient Athens, in the „school of education of Hellas” (Litak 2004), was referred to as *kalokagathia*. *Kalos* means a man with a beautiful harmonious physical structure, a good athlete, *agathos* means a good man. Upbringing in ancient culture was directed at the development of a universal human being, and what is important, it did not prepare a single social group within one nation. The ideal man was well developed in physical, mental and moral terms. Harmonious, comprehensive human formation was carried out through physical education – body beauty as well as musical, mental, moral and aesthetic (literary) beauty of the spirit. Mind and soul played a supreme role over the body, but bodily perfection was a value to be cared for.

The fascination with ideals, values and games in ancient Greece was the basis for the resurrection of the modern Olympic games by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who saw Olympism as a philosophy of life. The goal was to achieve a perfect balance between physicality and mind, on the one hand a well-shaped body and a wise mind on the other, the nobility of competition and humanity. The modern games were supposed to be a chance for the revival of a humanistic belief in man, and by spreading such values as equality, tolerance, brotherhood, harmonious development of body and spirit, were to become an arena of sport struggle while developing mutual cooperation for peace in the world. According to Jerzy Nowocień (2014), Pierre de Coubertin, „pointed out that physical culture is the foundation of every civilization, it is the germ of the size of every nation. He emphasized that the trained body and nobility of mind are characterized by a healthy spirit, and bodily training is the best moral protection”.

#### CULTURAL POTENTIAL OF SPORT AND RECREATION – MATERIAL CREATIONS

Due to the efforts of Baron de Coubertin, the 1st Modern Olympic Games took place in 1896 in Athens and at the same time the Olympic movement, which took on an organized form, began its operation. The goal of the movement was to promote values that lead to human perfection, recognizing the equality of all races, religions, cultures and national and political systems. The XXI century Olympism is now a universal idea, it concerns not only European culture, it has a global character and is perfectly understood through the cultures of other continents, also Asian and African. According to Lipoński (1996), it also takes into account the output of other cultures: „Olympism began to penetrate the non-European cultures on a larger scale 20–30 years ago, thus much later than other European ideas spreading around the world, such as the idea of the progress in technology knowledge”.

In turn, the current games, along with great sport spectacles and athletes competition, are also a competition in the category of astronomical costs, large, sumptuous buildings and dizzying spirit. In addition to this immeasurable lavishness, as Józef Lipiec (2014) wrote, „sport is not only the very top, even if brilliantly illuminated, leaving the floors of lower parties and roads in the semi-darkness and in the fog. The bottom of the pyramid is occupied by thousands and millions of small, intimate meetings, held around the globe, towards their own private amateurs’ delight, for health, company and fashion”. It turns out that sport is not only big arenas, great and modern equipped places of competition with the opponent, but also with yourself. The place of sport activity is also small

playgrounds in small towns or villages without luxurious stands, cloakrooms and bathrooms. This is the daily physical activity that participants in movement recreation are happy to do after their daily work or home duties. These are also the backyards where their first children's exercises are held, often in the sportswear of their heroes from the world of great sports.

These huge arenas of sports activity, thanks to the spectacles that take place on them, arouse great emotions among observers. The direct media message causes that crowds of fans participate in the competition together with the sportsmen. Heroes of these events are an example, pattern, impulse for other participants of physical culture, they are an ideal that others want to imitate.

Cultural potential is a determinant of the development of a given area or phenomenon, it is also the basis of human behavior and affects the development and shapes the values. Due to limitations caused by the size of publication, the subjective view was taken into account, i.e. engaging in activities in the field of physical culture in various roles, as well as objective one, i.e. tangible and intangible products of physical culture.

A spectacular example of physical products of physical culture associated with great sports are Olympic constructions. The newly built infrastructure created for the needs of a gigantic event is an organizational undertaking requiring many years of preparation and absorbing significant financial outlays for the construction and maintenance of sport complexes. Very often after the event, the hosts are not able to develop a specialized base or large complexes created for the needs of a single event. Left unattended and the idea of further functioning, abandoned buildings, and often even entire Olympic villages deteriorate and fall into disrepair. An example of such a building is the S-Bahn rail station near the Olympic Park Olympiapark München, which after the summer Olympics in Munich (1972) was finally closed in 1988. The bobsleigh track on the slopes of Mount Teine and destroyed and neglected ski lifts are a testimony to the former event after the Winter Olympics in Sapporo (1972). The complex of Olympic constructions after the Winter Games in Sarajevo (1984) was also in a similar situation, which was used for military purposes during the civil war.<sup>1</sup> After the summer Olympics in Athens (2004), the Olympic village was also unoccupied, which now resembles modern ruins, and only some of the remaining facilities are sporadically used. Also after the Olympics in Beijing (2008), the part of the complex regarding not very popular disciplines in this country, such as canoeing, bmx cycling, beach ball, have been undeveloped and decayed. The hosts managed to save the Olympic swimming pool before degeneration, which now

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<sup>1</sup> The judges' booth became a sniper stand, and the crashed podium of the place of execution.

houses the largest aquapark in Asia. An example of „a-single-event” investment is the infrastructure after the Winter Olympics in Sochi (2014), where no one uses a newly built block of flats, located on the periphery of Russia, which is now reminiscent of a ghost town.

Conversion of such specialized constructions into functional objects has become too difficult for most organizers, but apart from forgotten Olympic objects, there are also such cultural elements that serve a much longer and wider audience. These include sports stadiums – football or athletics – often built primarily for a specific sport event, which in later years constitute an important cultural center. Apart from sport competitions, these large venues also include music concerts, congresses, scientific picnics, sport galas or even book fairs. In turn, these slightly smaller buildings, besides the outstanding, world-famous athletes, also host participants of the so-called small sport, i.e. amateur athletes participating in physical culture through physical recreation. Very often, apart from events of international rank, school, academic and other cultural and recreational events take place on these facilities.

The awareness that a player and competitor of the so-called great sport previously used the same raceway, viewports or jumps is full of positive emotions for the average participant of physical recreation. The motivation to participate in physical activity, not only for a child, may be the fact that at the same sport stadium, an idol can be practiced – a sport star and an ordinary statistical family who came to an athletics track as part of recreation.

Participants of recreational facilities, created for small sport, are people using the so-called eagles, recreational and cycling paths, aquaparks, open swimming pools or other such facilities. Also playgrounds for children are nothing more than instruments to participate in physical culture. It is on them, and not on large Olympic complexes, that the participation of several-year-olds in motorized activities begins. In fact, most often backyard ladders, swings, slides or lawns are the first step of children to participate in physical culture. On playgrounds, when participating in games under the supervision of parents, guardians or teachers, several-year-old children are participants in physical culture. On these backyard, school or pre-school mini physical recreation facilities, young people start their physical activity. Implementation of the need for physical activity at this age is the potential for proper participation in physical culture and the willingness to pursue this active lifestyle in the future (Trzeźniowski 1995). Considering the potential of sports facilities from this perspective, it is noteworthy that the material products of human activity created for small sport are a more durable and more effective element of the cultural potential of physical activity than for the great sport.

A very important element, apart from sports and recreation complexes, are airports, roads, stations, parking lots, hotels, restaurants, i.e. other infrastructure that can be a development factor for a given city after the grand event. These material values obviously contribute to cultural development provided that they are properly developed and maintained after the event. It is extremely important to create care and enhance cultural potential, including protection against the loss of acquired opportunities by weaker environments. This raises the problem of a proper management of cultural potential and ensuring the proper access to its resources along with the proper use in accordance with possibilities. This applies, as the experience shows, both this great one played in the spotlights as well as the small and local one, which often without proper support can be wasted.

Norms, rules and regulations created for psychical culture on the one hand limit the participants' freedom of action, but on the other hand, they give the opportunity to create new and exceed old borders, set new standards, rules and possibilities, i.e. creation – which means to participate as a person creating a culture. The reserve of cultural content, from which the participant draws, is virtually unlimited, especially in today's times of general, unlimited access to all resources and messages. Hence, a significant problem becomes a participant's making the right choice from widely available ideals, heroes, cultural models and values.

## CULTURAL POTENTIAL OF SPORT AND RECREATION – NON-MATERIAL CREATIONS

In today's sport, with ubiquitous commercialization and mercantilization, it is noteworthy that ethical values at the level of great sport are increasingly rarely noticed, as Halina Zdebska-Biziewska (2014) notes: these values are primarily located at the level of sport of children and young people, which explains its educational role. Sport heroes – idols – have a decisive influence on fans, and often this interaction is completely devoid of criticism. The younger generation of supporters, the more uncritical the sport hero's perception. In the current commercialized sport, there is little space for the publication of such positive attitudes; it is not impossible, but it requires considerable commitment. In order for positive values to be emphasized and published, some preparations in the field of ethical education of all participants of sport culture should be made. Particular emphasis should be put on appropriate models among children and young people to develop in a spirit of positive values that will shape their choices in the future. For this, it is necessary to educate all participants of physical activity from professional big sport to several-years-old children participating in games

and motor activities. Players, trainers, doctors, supporters, journalists, parents, educators must assume that sport (big and small) is a training of interpersonal relations and is a universal carrier of values. Eagerness, conscientiousness, diligence, care, kindness are traits worth imitating. The sport hero, an idol who will be masculine, chivalrous, honorable, generous, truthful, humane, loyal and honest will give a testimony to values that will be the potential of a good athlete and a good man. According to Ryszard Żukowski (1994), the essence of fair play in sports usually boils down to unselfish respect for the rules of the game, respect for the opponent, maintaining equal opportunities during competition, ability not to use the random advantage, giving up the practical benefits of victory and minimizing the suffering of the opponent.

These values and emotions, both positive and negative, pervade the world of masters and spread to the other participants. A sport fan is a character, without which it is difficult today to imagine a big event, tournament, competition. From great international shows to small town events, fans are a constant and important element of competition. A wide range of emotions of rival supporters, forms of cheering on their players and the style of honoring the opponent is a continuous topic raised by various environments, not only connected with the world of sport. There are situations, in which the supporter takes over the main role in the event and because of the way of expressing emotions in a way that often adversely affects the outcome of competition or even makes it impossible. Young people are taught how to cheer on sport fields, often without the influence of school or family. They learn practical behaviors during the battlefields of their heroes, usually from very few older colleagues. In the stands of football fields, the atmosphere usually has nothing to do with respect for the opponent. In addition to great emotions, unique impressions, excellent atmosphere, there are also negative ones: an opportunity to beat or confront the police, when in the crowd and behind the adults with a face covered with a scarf and a hood on the head, young people can express their emotions using fists, kicks or torn benches.

Gustaw Holoubek emphasized that his dream is for people watching sport events to resemble a theater auditorium in their behavior, „where solidarity in art is combined with a choice of artistic values aimed at the beauty and experience of beauty, not only the effectiveness of the game based on the probability or equation with many unknowns. The fan package consists of entrance ticket to the stadium, but it also includes screams, curses, insults, getting up, bumping, [...] what elsewhere is considered a verbal foul and would be a reason to remove someone from the theater, here it is taken at face value” (Zuchora 2014).

There are different patterns of support behavior, often depending on the discipline. In elite competition environments, there are positive behavioral models,

during which the warming up of your player to the fight takes place with the opponent's recognition. There is a display of strength, fitness and skills, while maintaining the dignity of competitors from all rival groups. The cultural content resource that the young person chooses from in the era of globalization is unlimited. However, these choices are determined by various factors of an external nature, significant belonging to social groups, clubs, behavior patterns, media, fashion, etc. Considering the internal factors, both aspirations, needs and efforts as well as competences, perception ability, opportunities related to the nature of participation and its scope or intensity play an important role.

Analyzing the cultural potential of children's games and motion activities, that is in the current paper, children's and adults' sports, highlighting various forms and different scope of participation in sport culture, contribution to shaping potential made by other groups that are not associated with sport activity on a daily basis, should also be noted. Disabled people You can be indicated here, who successfully participate in sport competition, they even have their own special Olympics. This way of overcoming further barriers shows people, often excluded, the possibility of appearing and showing themselves in a competition at a very high level.

Another characteristic group may be the generation of seniors, who actively participate in their *plus* category in the disciplines they choose. No one is surprised at the present by a student or *the third-age* university student, who actively participates in fitness, yoga or running in street or bike races over long distances.

Also a significant group, that creates its own cultural potential with sports, are children and young people choosing their own plays and motion games. Backyard plays and games, adjusted to the age and skills, chosen by participants in accordance with their interests (Bondarowicz, Staniszewski 2004), are games that most adults remember from their childhood, and which have evolved through successive generations, and are now a very important element in shaping the personality of a young person (Gilewicz 1964).

This cultural diversity of participants creates, on the one hand, challenges in everyday relations, overcoming challenges or prejudices, setting new rules and regulations, on the other hand, process of skillful moving in a certain public space, negotiating the co-presence, taking different roles in various relationships, seeking compromises, building social relations, is educating. This is an extremely important contribution to building the cultural potential of the community and the way of communicating in the common world of symbols and meanings.

## CULTURAL POTENTIAL OF SPORT AND RECREATION – ART

An extremely rich and separate element of cultural potential in physical activity is artistic and intellectual creation inspired by sport events. A powerful treasury of masterpieces since the Greek and Mediterranean antiquities containing achievements of great masters inspired by sport. As Józef Lipiec (2014) wrote „[...] modernity has inherited distinctive traces of sport and art symbiosis. This is evidenced by the texts of Homer and Pindar, sculptures of Myron, Phidias, magnificent architecture of the stadiums of Hellas and Rome, as well as all the mentions of historians and philosophers of those centuries”. On every continent and in every culture: East, West, South and North, a wealth of creators depicting the history of the world stimulated by movement, body and competition can be noticed. These products perform significant functions, because they document events, decorating and ennobling. Work of these artists in the field of architecture, sculpture, painting, music, literature and photography takes sports from stadiums to salons, from sport halls to galleries.

We should also mention Polish artists who were inspired by sports. In this group, the works of Polish artists – Olympians who have made a great contribution to world culture deserve special distinction. Such a pantheon of celebrities was presented by Porada (2017), showing ninety-two artists from the fields of architecture, literature, painting, music and sculpture. Among them, the Polish medalists of the Olympic art competitions, Kazimierz Wierzyński (Olympian in the field of literature from Amsterdam in 1928 – Olympic gold medal), Zbigniew Turski (gold medalist of the Summer Games in 1948 in the field of music), Józef Klukowski deserve special attention (gold medal in 1932 and silver medal in 1936 of the Summer Games in the field of sculpture), Janina Konarska-Słonimska (Olympian of the Summer Games in Los Angeles in 1932 in the field of painting – silver medalist), Jan Parandowski (bronze medalist of the Summer Games in 1936 in Berlin in the field of literature), Władysław Skoczylas (bronze medalist of the Summer Games in 1928 in Amsterdam in the art competition, painting) and Stanisław Ostojka-Chrostowski (bronze medalist of the Summer Games in Berlin in 1936 in painting). 1948 was the last, in which Olympic art competitions were held (Porada 2017).

It is impossible to ignore the artistic creativity of children and youth, who has also been activated by sport events. In numerous competitions organized by various institutions, they create their own works as beginning artists of painting, drawing, poetry or photography, who seek inspiration in a competition.

## CONCLUSIONS

When considering the cultural potential at the subjective level, a multidimensional image is also obtained. At the individual level, the potential means the willingness to participate in physical culture in a wide range of possibilities: from creation through active support or participation to use; from a sport activist through a teacher, training manager, instructor, trainer, psychologist, physician, physiologist, assistant, judge to a player, participant, parent, fan, journalist. The willingness to participate is the result of human development as a cultural being, shaped by the culture and creating the culture. The participant operates in a world, where he is subjected to constant modifications. In addition, in the environment of physical activity, games and motion games, he is additionally disciplined by the system of rules and principles. In the world of competition, participant at every level makes choices that involve not only the technique or tactics of action. Dilemmas may also refer to moral issues, when one may consider the issue of whether to play in accordance with the rules, whether to use unlawful means or methods, whether to treat the opponent as a partner in the game, or the enemy, whether cheer with respect or hate, whether it is worth honestly to judge the more so because unfair competition can bring significant benefits?

Cultural potential is a capital that is not always properly used. Possibility of building and strengthening the motion plays and games, or broadly understood sport will be possible only when its elements are recognized and precisely defined. If talents of individuals or their skills of active participation in physical culture in various forms and through various elements, e.g. special traditions, material heritage, cultural resources contained in tangible and intangible features will not be recognized then cultural potential will not be exploited. It is extremely important to take action in small communities that are able to create creative individuals. It is important to create incentives and facilities to build the social relations and create demand for creative activities and products. It is important to create new opportunities for places or events that may not immediately, but potentially, can trigger some activity in the world of culture. Participation in culture in general is the fundamental basis for developing the individual and the community. Shaping and developing competences, skills and attitudes is possible through the participation in various forms of culture. This activity builds individual and collective identity, which is important for further development of an individual.

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