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**TAFISA AND UNESCO JOINT EFFORT FOR BUILDING CULTURAL CAPITAL THROUGH TRADITIONAL SPORTS. AN ANALYSIS OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> WORLD SPORT FOR ALL GAMES**

The aim of this article is to emphasize and acknowledge traditional sports as an important historical and socio-cultural phenomenon. By describing ‘the traditional sports and games movement’ from its organization to some key ideas, the authors show how local and national heritage of physical culture is important to every society. Within the current process of globalization, which touches on not only economic and political domains but also cultural and ethnic ones, people need to be aware of their heritage and identity. Various forms of our own, indigenous physical activity are part of this identity. In this article, the authors show the general background to the current situation of traditional sports in a globalized world, which is the socio-cultural context in which they exist, by describing some examples of these kinds of sports and initiatives all over the world. Afterwards, the focus will turn to a particular event – The 5<sup>th</sup> World Sport for All Games – during which traditional sports and games are played and promoted, showing the existence of this kind of sport as a potentially efficient tool in promoting cultural exchange and preserving heritage in the contemporary world.

Key words: globalization, cultural identity, traditional sports and games, socio-cultural values of sport, World Sport for All Games event

**INTRODUCTION – THE CURRENT WORLD BETWEEN GLOBALIZATION AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY**

In the contemporary world, globalization is a process which constructs the world’s cultural and social reality. As Polish anthropologist Waldemar Kuligowski (2007: 9) claims: “Globalization is currently one of the most frequently used terms in social science, humanistic, economic and other works”. Moreover, globalization touches not only on economic, political, financial or social domains, but also cultural and ethnic ones. This process has created a new social situation in the postmodern world that allows for heightened interaction. In the past, societies lived in more separate geographical and ethnic settings, having limited contacts with other groups and in reality knowing very little about people living in remote places of the world. But this situation now belongs to the past.

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Nowadays, people can travel all over the world and meet others thanks to improved and less expensive transport and communication systems. This has created greater opportunities to exchange not only cultural and social traditions, elements of national, ethnic, and cultural legacy and material things, but also ideas, values and symbols between peoples. Although generally positive, such a situation can also lead to conflicts and even wars, which unfortunately still happen all over the globe.

This state is connected with the fact that globalization has contributed significantly to peoples' lives both in a positive and in a negative way at the same time. On the one hand, the world has 'shrunk' and one can travel, meet others, exchange ideas, start up internationally operating companies, create worldwide business opportunities and create international and intercultural bonds between individuals and nations. On the other hand, globalization, along with other processes, is thought to be responsible for creating a new social reality in the postmodern world, suffering from social crises of authority, uncertain, labile identities, the threat of homogenization and passive acceptance of all things that are happening at a global level.

As a consequence, people who are aware of these threats do not want to be merely passive recipients of the products of globalization and their consequences. Rather they want to have a say in their local reality. This is a kind of response to globalization 'from below'.

This answer calls for 'a return back to basics' to cultural identity, locality and ethnicity. Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells claims: "Our world, and our lives, are being shaped by the conflicting trends of globalization and identity. (...) Along with the technological revolution, the transformation of capitalism, and the demise of statism, we have experienced, in the last quarter of the century, the widespread surge of powerful expressions of collective identity. (...). These expressions are multiple, highly diversified, following the contours of each culture, and of historical sources of formation of each identity" (Castells 1997:1).

This identity, regardless of the level (local, regional or national) and dimension (cultural, ethnic, religious, or national) is usually based on some cultural elements which are used to maintain, express, promote and even create a collective sense of identity within a certain group. Collective histories (frequently based on mythology), territories, languages and religions could be given here as examples. However, in the social and cultural context of a globalized world, these markers of identity are sometimes insufficient. People attempt to create their identity using various elements. One such element is sport.

## SPORT AS AN ELEMENT OF IDENTITY

Sport has had a great history of being an element of identity. On the one hand, many local and ethnic groups and nations have been using sport to create an oppressive, exclusive identity directed against other nations. The list of conflicts involving sport is long: the Balkan wars, the conflict between Scotland and England, the Basque quest for independence from Spain, Egypt against Algeria, and Ireland against England just to mention a few. Indeed, in Latin America an international military conflict occurred as a consequence of a football

match between Salvador and Honduras, as described by Polish writer and reporter Ryszard Kapuściński (2004).

On the other hand, sport can be, and often is, a positive and creative force bringing fairness, cooperation and cultural exchange, and a valuable platform for better understanding in the process of peace building, especially nowadays. At the Olympic Games, different people from various cultural backgrounds meet each other for a festival of youth and sportsmanship in what is almost literally a “global village”<sup>1</sup> (or at least this is what the games should be, according to Pierre de Coubertin, its modern reviver). However, in this paper we do not want to argue for or against the idea of the Olympic Games being a platform for exchange of the best cultural traditions and practices between the various nations, as Olympism claims the Olympics to be. Rather, we would like to emphasize a particular type of games, one concerning traditional sports. A brief analysis of the current situation with these sports all over the world and their role in the aforementioned context – as a multicultural platform for better global understanding and building cultural capital – will be the main line of argumentation in the paper.

## TRADITIONAL SPORT IN MODERN CONTEXT

Wojciech Lipoński (2001) in his comprehensive *World Sport Encyclopedia* [Encyklopedia sportów świata] describes over 3,000 traditional sports, games and plays<sup>2</sup> from most of the regions and cultures around the world and it is a unique addition to the literature in the field of sport and culture. It is not simply a collection of different sports. Each sport, game and play comes with a carefully documented ethnological background, rooted in various historical sources from antique vases to paintings, sculptures and literary sources. The author claims that we can find over seven thousand games all over the world (Lipoński 2004: 5). They are scattered through all the inhabited continents, and are still a vital part of human culture. However, they have been neglected by scholars of the social sciences for years, as Jeremy MacClancy (1996) notes. However, this situation is beginning to change. The number of researchers and institutions now dealing with the subject of traditional games and sports, and their role in the contemporary world, is constantly increasing on every continent. We can mention here several examples just to stress the growing interest in the matter.

In the United States there are many works which have contributed to the more general subject of the study of sport, games and play, also including traditional forms. Stewart Culin was the first in America to propose the study of games and play as a regular science, publishing his book on Korean games in 1895 (Culin 1895). The above-mentioned researcher Jeremy MacClancy has also contributed to the development of a very fruitful subdiscipline

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<sup>1</sup> “Global village” is a term used by Marshall McLuhan in 1964 in his book *Gutenberg's galaxy* – meaning unification of social and cultural aspects of life.

<sup>2</sup> “Play” in this sense means a form of physical, playful activity, and a very first variety of game and sport. It refers to a range of spontaneous, voluntary, frivolous and non-serious activity. Some plays exhibit no goals nor rules and are considered to be “unstructured” in the literature. For more information on play see the book *Play* by C. Garvey (1999), published by Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

of the anthropology of sport. He is the editor of the book *Sport, Identity, Ethnicity*, in which a number of interesting relations between sport, identity, gender, social status and ethnicity are described, including traditional sports (MacClancy 1996). Kendal Blanchard is another author of a very important book in the context of traditional games. His *Anthropology of Sport* (1995) is really the first guidebook and introduction to this discipline. As the author writes, “Anthropologists are taking sport behavior seriously, analyzing it with systematic flair, and recognizing its importance as a phase of the total lifestyle among the people with whom they work” (Blanchard 1995: 2). Also, Alice Taylor Cheska describes the study of play from five anthropological perspectives: antiquarianism, evolutionism, diffusionism, functionalism and structuralism. However, one ought to consider also what Cheska (1978: 26) had suggested earlier when she indicated the following areas for the research on play: 1) play as a mirror of pervasive values and attitudes (motivation, achievement), 2) play and social control (inter- and intra-societal conflict, social sanctions of wit and humor, safety value, index of tensions, 3) play and social and psychological problems of Western society, 4) play and linguistics (communication), 5) cognition and symbolism, 6) religion and play. She also linked play to politics (as do Huizinga 1955 and Sutton-Smith 1995), law, game theory, aggression, creativity and cultural innovation and the didactic and socializing value of play among different age categories (Cheska 1978). This correlates with our understanding of the sense of doing research on traditional games and play activities with the purpose of revitalizing and reintroducing them back into social and cultural use.

On other continents, interesting initiatives associated with the subject of traditional games and sports have also been undertaken. As far as South America is concerned, in Brazil the Games of Indigenous Nations (Jogos dos Povos Indigenas) are organized regularly and Roland Renson and Veerle van Mele have written a book on traditional games in South America (Renson and van Mele Veerle 1992). In Asia interest in this matter is currently increasing in South Korea, India, Japan, China, Taiwan and many other Asian countries (see e.g. Appadurai 1996). When it comes to Africa, Alice Taylor Cheska wrote a dictionary of games and dances of West African nations (Cheska 1987) as a way of preserving their elements of movement culture as an intangible heritage. Such work is vital, as numerous traditional games and sports on this continent are threatened by the growing popularity of modern football, which can lead to the extinction of more traditional, local sports. However, in Australia the situation is markedly different and the country has its own unique cultural identity, consisting of many sport elements, with the most popular being Australian Football or *footy*, a combination of rugby, Gaelic football and a traditional Australian game called *boogalah*. But we need to remember that Australia used to be Aborigines’ soil. They still have a rich diversity of games and pastimes. Some indigenous games have recently been documented (e.g. *kee’an*, *tarnabai*, *kalq*) and efforts are being made to encourage people to play and understand them and also better appreciate these aspects of traditional Aboriginal culture (Dixon 2008).

Europe has a dedicated organization for such work, the European Traditional Sports and Games Association (ETSGA), founded in 2001 at Lesneven in France. For its members, traditional sports have become the most important object of study. The constitution of the organization says: ‘It comprises sports or cultural federations, associations, educational institutions, or companies whose aim is the management, promotion and the guardianship of

traditional games and sports in Europe' (AEJEST 2012). Thus, the main goal of the ETSGA is to promote and develop the practice of traditional sports and games and also to support the creation of a European network, documents for educational application and the setting up of associations, international meetings and scientific conferences. This is united under the umbrella of UNESCO and popularized with the support of TAFISA (The Association for International Sport for All). UNESCO and TAFISA recognize the potential of sport for all as a catalyst for social inclusion. All these endeavors have been taken because of the lack of 'ludo-diversity', an appreciation of the variation of movement cultures, encompassing the domains of play, physical culture, and bodily expression whether through games, sports, physical exercises, dance, or acrobatic performance (Renson 2004).

## THE VALUES OF TRADITIONAL SPORTS AND GAMES AND ITS PROMOTION BY UNESCO AND TAFISA

As mentioned above, traditional sports and games are a symbol of the cultural diversity of our societies. They are one of the ways of building tolerance, mutual understanding and respect, thereby contributing to the building of a 'culture of peace'. They can contribute considerably to sustainable development by fostering intergenerational dialogue and promoting respect for the environment. UNESCO and TAFISA foster the preservation and promotion of traditional sports and games, considering its manifold benefits for community development and social cohesion. Because so many sports and games have already disappeared, or are threatened with extinction by the combined effect of globalization and harmonization of sport disciplines, UNESCO and TAFISA have jointly declared to take action in the "Appeal on the Promotion and Preservation of Traditional Sports and Games" signed during The 4<sup>th</sup> TAFISA World Sport for All Games in Busan in 2008 (UNESCO/TAFISA 2008) through the support of networks, capacity-building programs and events as well as work with academic institutes for the documentation and evaluation of traditional sports and games.

In the vision of UNESCO and TAFISA, sport can build vibrant communities by enhancing collective pride, identity and a sense of belonging. In order to develop global cooperation in the field of sport for all, and particularly traditional sports and games (TSG), these two organizations in cooperation with the Department of Olympism and Ethnology of Sport of the University School of Physical Education in Poznań (Poland) have launched a new project, "Call for good practice for TSG and community development". Through this call for proposals UNESCO, TAFISA and the university are attempting to collect good practices of traditional sports and games, to assess which of them can effectively contribute to community development and to evaluate the manifold ways in which traditional sports and games contribute to the cohesion and development of their communities worldwide. The parties involved in the project believe that the results of this work will support international advocacy for these kinds of sports and games in the future. Any country which claims ownership of a traditional sport or game and is willing to present it to the world can submit an application for their traditional sport to TAFISA to be historically studied and eventually recognized as a part of their cultural and sporting tradition. Moreover, TAFISA with the support of UNESCO is undertaking an

interesting and valuable initiative, attempting to promote traditional games and sports. World Sport for All Games serves as an event during which a genuine celebration of cultural diversity through sport is being realized. This event took place in Siauliai, Lithuania in 2012.

## 5<sup>TH</sup> WORLD SPORT FOR ALL GAMES SIAULIAI, LITHUANIA IN 2012 – A MULTICULTURAL “KALEIDOSCOPE”

The TAFISA World Sport for All Games is a special event where delegations from around the world can present their traditional games or sports to the general public and invited delegations from various nations. Everyone is welcome to attend these games, but what differentiates them from the modern Olympic Games is that each person is invited to “have a try” at any sport he or she likes. There is no place for any aggression or violence, no need for any drug-taking or cheating to ensure victory. On the contrary, it is a space for fun, the exchange of cultural traditions and their popularization among other nations, and mutual understanding. Members of the general public, media, and government representatives, as well as TAFISA members, all are invited and everyone is equally important. It is similar to the “World Gymnaestrada” event, where gymnasts from around the world can display their skills and where bringing participants together in order to build bridges between people is more important than winning (Mechbach and Waneberg 2011).

The primary aims of these Games are: 1) preservation and promotion of traditional sports and games and therefore national identity and heritage, 2) encouraging cooperation between nations, 3) providing experience, exchanging opportunities, and, 4) enjoyment. Moreover, the event has already gained some prestige and recognition through the patronage of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Council of Sport and Physical Education (ICSSPE).

In order to have a chance to participate in the games of traditional sports, representatives from a particular nation have to prepare and present a game or sport which has been practiced for more than 100 years. At the same time the activity has to be entertaining for participants and spectators. It ought to be an active part of the tradition and identity of a country/region as a reflection of regional or national heritage. Most of the games presented have another advantage, as they are cost-efficient and easy to organize. Most importantly though, every game should be accessible to each and every individual, neither difficult nor dangerous to participate in.

The Games are based mainly on a program of sports including traditional sports, demonstration sports, sports for disabled people, championships and competitions. There is also a “Day of Nations”, featuring mass sports events: bicycle riding, nordic walking and performances of modern gymnastics. All of this happens in an environment of cultural coexistence that include a programme of special events such as opening and closing ceremonies, congresses, World Walking Day, International Folk Festivals (e.g. chorus, music). The atmosphere of this event is always truly fascinating and cheerful from the very beginning.

## A SCHEDULE OF THE GAMES IN LITHUANIA

The 5<sup>th</sup> Games in Siauliai started on 6 July 2012, with a colorful parade of the delegations of all the participating countries. It was called a “Walking Day” – participants dressed in national colors carried national flags and walked through the city greeting its inhabitants gathered along the route. It was a time for integration, fun and building friendship in a wonderful multicultural environment and peaceful atmosphere.

After reaching the main arena in Siauliai all delegates witnessed the official Opening Ceremony of the Games. It was divided into two parts. In the first part Lithuania as a host country made a presentation not only of Lithuania’s mythology, history, traditional and cultural values, but also as its status as a modern, developing country aware of the richness of its heritage, history and culture, including traditional sports. The second part of the opening ceremony was then devoted to all the delegations of participants. They entered the stage after being announced alphabetically by nation in the manner of the Olympic Games. The great sporting festival atmosphere was observed together with a celebration of life and cultural diversity. All these thanks to Physical Culture, a genuine example of positive values of the growing worldwide movement, “Sport for All”.

European Day was next in the program. It was a time for delegations to perform their traditional sports or games. The Polish delegation presented two old Polish games – *pierścieniówka* and *kapela* on the crowded boulevard, the main venue in the city centre. *Pierścieniówka* especially attracted a lot of attention as a universal team game during which language communication among international participants was not a problem. Many local residents and also people from other countries took part in the game. During this particular day many other events took place all over the city, including folk dances and music concerts (from South African, Lebanese and Lithuanian delegations), gymnastics performances (the Danish delegation), a scientific conference and eventually a parade of hot-air balloons at night.

8 July was the day dedicated to “World Nations”. In the context of traditional sports and games it was the most important event. Main regional and national performances of world delegations took place at Siauliai City Stadium. It was a day full of sporting attractions. Everyone who was willing to could take part in every traditional sports and games originated in many countries representing all continents.

The atmosphere during these days was full of enjoyment and fun. Having a chance to experience and take part in a spectrum of sports and games such as Polish *pierścieniówka*, Belgian *popin-jay shooting*, American *shuffleboard*, Japanese *gateball*, a Spanish throwing game called *the frog*, the national Latvian game *novus*, Italian *tamburello* or even in more physical team sports like *Australian* or *Gaelic football* and Romanian *oina* was an unforgettable experience. Celebration of sport for all and life in a really peaceful surrounding, these are very important messages of traditional sports, genuine sports for everyone.

During the Games the TAFISA/UNESCO International Forum “The Role of Sport and Culture in Community Development” took place. There were 16 lecturers invited to represent various regions and institutions around the world. The main topic to be discussed was the current state of traditional sports and games in their respective countries, the gravity of this

subject and the possibilities to be developed. All the speakers presented their research on traditional sports in interesting, different ways often supported by practical samples. The *Gerlev* model of education through traditional games from Denmark was the most interesting case there. Also presented were educational programs including traditional games in Iran; the connections among culture, sport and traditional games in India; a case study of *taekwondo* and a project of a taekwondo park in South Korea; an example of development of a traditional Italian game called *tamburello*; traditional movement culture through games in Spain; and the promotion of education through sport in Kenya. A Polish delegate spoke of initiatives connected with traditional sports and games undertaken in Poland. The last and the most important point of the Forum was signing an agreement entitled “Call for Good Practices in Traditional Games” as a treaty for the scientific institution to give attention to the task of evaluating a definition and then search for benefits of traditional sports/games as crucial for a development of future World Sport for All Games among three different institutions: TAFISA, UNESCO and the University School of Physical Education in Poznań.

The last part of this exceptional event of the 5<sup>th</sup> World Traditional Games was the Closing Ceremony, with the official speech of the President of TAFISA Dr Kang-Too Lee and the Mayor of Siauliai Justinas Sartauskas which eventually closed the Games. The event concluded with a big party for all, officials and participants, to celebrate friendship, respect and mutual understanding.

## TRADITIONAL SPORTS DURING THIS SPECIAL EVENT

At the 5<sup>th</sup> World Sport for All Games many various traditional sports were presented. Participants from Poland featured *pierścieniówka*. Created by Władysław Robakowski<sup>3</sup>, it is quite similar to volleyball but with some important differences. *Pierścieniówka* was forgotten after the Second World War, but was revived in 2003 by Wojciech Lipoński and Małgorzata Bronikowska at the Department of Olympism and Ethnology of Sport at University School of Physical Education in Poznań (Poland). Now its popularity is constantly growing as a recreational game suitable for everyone. *Pierścieniówka* is played by two teams with four players in each team. The court is divided into playing areas. Three players are in the rear area and must not move into the 1.5 meter long zone close to the net. The aim of the game is to pass the ball through one of the three rings in the net and make the opposing team fail. This game is accessible for everyone, easy to organize (a volleyball court can be used) and cost-efficient (only a special kind of net with three rings is required). It is still in practice and has a chance to become an element of Polish cultural identity. At the 5<sup>th</sup> Games in Lithuania *pierścieniówka* was one of the most interesting examples of a dynamic game which anyone could enjoy. The game is simple, and safe as it is a non-contact game. Thanks to that, many people from various countries played and enjoyed the chance to take part in an interesting aspect

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<sup>3</sup> Władysław Robakowski – Polish PE teacher invented *pierścieniówka* game in 1936 after he was observing some fishermen throwing buoys through torn fish nets. This simple activity inspired him to initiate a new, national game.

of Polish movement culture. As well as *piersceniówka* Polish participants also introduced traditional games such as *kapela* and *grele*. *Kapela* used to be a game of young shepherds from the Kociewie region of northwest Poland. The game was played using a stack of stones called *kapela* (chapel) placed one upon another which resembled one of many small chapels built along Polish roads. One of the players stands in the middle of a circle, 8–10 m in diameter, drawn on the ground close to the stack of stones. His role is to guard the “chapel”. The other players standing outside the circle take turns throwing stones at the chapel. If a thrown or rolled stone hits and knocks the chapel over the successful thrower runs to fetch the stone while the “guardian of the chapel” in the circle tries to reconstruct the stack. If the guardian rebuilds the stack before the thrower recovers his stones, he can then throw his hat at the running player. If the thrower is hit, he becomes the new guardian.

Overall, as many as 59 countries from all over the world participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Games. It is difficult to even mention here the richness of movement tradition of the countries presented in Siauliai. However, some examples are worth mentioning. For example, Australia has presented part of their movement tradition reflected in the game of Australian football, with its heritage of new and traditional games. This makes it a very interesting and popular element of movement culture in Australia. Ireland introduced two sports particularly popular in the country – *Gaelic football* – a local modification of rugby and hurling – and a several-hundred-year-old game played with sticks, called *hurling*. Both games are two of the most important elements of cultural identity in Ireland and are deeply rooted in the historical development of the Irish nation. From Asia, there were some interesting examples, including Indian *kabaddi*, a very enduring but yet mostly tactical game, or the Iranian *zurkhaneh* – national wrestling – which is a complex series of acrobatic exercises performed to the sound of traditional music and one of the oldest forms of wrestling, thought to date back more than 4,000 years. The popularity of this sport is growing and in 2009 the first World Championship was held in Baku (Azerbaijan). As far as South America is concerned, Brazil presented a very important element of their culture – a combination of dance, game and music called *capoeira*. Many Brazilians do not consider *capoeira* a sport, because it does not usually contain any elements of competition, but as Jeremy MacClancy claims, sport does not have to be competitive and lead to a particular result nor does it have to involve dividing teams or players into winners and losers (MacClancy 1996). Moreover, in 1930 *capoeira* was recognized as a sport and at the same time a significantly important part of Brazilian culture (5<sup>th</sup> TAFISA World Sport for All Games’ Guidebook). From North America, the United States representative demonstrated a game called *shuffleboard* in which players use broom-shaped paddles to push weighted pucks, aiming at putting them within a marked area. The most important objective of this game is to slide, by hand, all four of one’s weights alternatively against those of an opponent, so that they reach the highest scoring area without falling off the end of the board into the trough. The whole history of the creation and development of this game is unclear. Nevertheless, shuffleboard is an active form of popular amusement not only in the USA, but also in Europe.

When it comes to Europe, there were plenty of interesting examples of traditional sports and games still played in many European countries. Interesting examples include Romania with its national sport *oina* – similar to baseball, which history dates back to the

15<sup>th</sup> century and is now included in physical education programmes in schools; and Spain with its various precision throwing games (*bolos*) coming from many regions of this country. The host country, Lithuania, presented a national sport, *ritinis*, invented in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and derived from the culture of shepherds. The sport has now been moved to a playing area and it is now played by organized clubs which participate in a national championship. Scandinavian countries also introduced interesting sports and games: Denmark presented many games which you can find in its unique park of traditional games and sports in Gerlev. Sweden presented a popular game called *kubb* and Iceland a really interesting, national type of wrestling known as *glima*. Other examples came from Italy, with its example of recreational game called *tamburello* – very popular in Italy and many other European and North African countries, and a traditional national sport from the Netherlands called *fierljeppen* – leaping with poles through water channels – which was derived from farmers’ culture, now very popular at rural festivals.

## THE LEGACY OF THE TAFISA 5<sup>TH</sup> WORLD TRADITIONAL GAMES

The games described above differ from professional sports, as victory is not the priority. Indeed, what is important is that the Games are traditional and accessible for all. In this sense it is the only occasion where participants, spectators and citizens can not only see but also personally experience traditional sports such Dutch *fierljeppen* or Polish *pierscieniówka*, Iranian *zurkhaneh* or a traditional game of India *kabaddi* alongside examples of Basque *pelota* or French *petanque*. Who would otherwise know of these sports outside of their respective cultures, as they are not televised? These kinds of events show us – the global society, how little we know of each other. But on the other hand such an event, with all the nations and their traditional sports, is a great opportunity to get to know each other better by presenting, and at the same time experiencing, the sports heritage of various cultures. These sporting traditions, if valued, can help create an environment where people can live in harmony with different cultural traditions, building bridges between cultures and enhancing mutual understanding. In this way, these Games hark back to de Coubertin’s idea of ‘all games, all nations.’ Obviously, the added value is that, regardless of where we live, our societies are becoming increasingly multi-ethnic and multi-cultural. Common bonds, values, and practices are increasingly needed to knit such societies together into harmonious patchworks. A shared appreciation of sport and traditions of physical activity may be one of the unifying means.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Games highlighted that sport, especially in its traditional forms, can unite people rather than divide them. Participants were able to celebrate cultural diversity through participation in games and sports coming from different regions of the world. Such opportunities are vital in the context of our contemporary socio-cultural reality where global processes are mixed with local perspectives, to cater to the needs of ethnic and cultural identities. The Games are inscribed in this reality, but in a positive way of being a tool and platform for better global understanding and enjoying cultural differences of this world. During the 5<sup>th</sup> Games in Lithuania this mechanism was genuinely visible everywhere. The TAFISA World Sport for All Games are a vibrant and entertaining endeavor, offering a unique opportunity to demonstrate

and discover the traditional and contemporary games and sports of cultures from around the globe. Thanks to the opportunity to actively take part in these games, everyone could feel the atmosphere of fun, enjoyment, friendship and cooperation rather than confrontation, hostility and hard competition typical of many professional sports.

We are certainly aware that it was only a festival. In consequence, during everyday life people lack constant access to participate in such an event and celebrate cultural diversity through active participation in various sports and games from all over the world. Nevertheless, these kinds of festivals are numerous in many parts of the world (Aste Nagusia in Basque Country where sport is a visible and constant part of this festival, the Highland Games dedicated to sport in Scotland and many others). Thanks to such kind of festivals and other events and thanks to traditional sports people can take part in them frequently and enjoy their power.

We are also aware of the fact that traditional sports also sometimes suffer from the kinds of ‘diseases’ that have ‘infected’ modern sports, such as professionalization. Nevertheless, as research on traditional spots has shown, they still have many physical, intellectual, emotional, socio-cultural and even moral values, and a positive influence on people who take part in them (Gomaratur 2009).

In the future, as American anthropologist of sport Kendall Blanchard claims, traditional sports can be paradoxically even more ‘consistent’ with the world’s culture and people needs than modern sport which is becoming to lose his legitimacy as ‘sport’ (Blanchard 1995: 247–248). Indeed, in a world where globalization is a process which is being challenged by ‘the power of identity’ (Castells 1997), traditional sports can become one of the most interesting and important factors that can help people to maintain and express their identity, but in a positive way of sharing values and experiences with others during common participation in sport.

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#### WSPÓLNA INICJATYWA TAFISY I UNESCO W CELU BUDOWANIA KAPITAŁU KULTUROWEGO DZIĘKI SPORTOM TRADYCYJNYM. ANALIZA 5. ŚWIATOWYCH IGRZYSK SPORTU DLA WSZYSTKICH

Celem tego artykułu jest zwrócenie uwagi i docenienie sportów tradycyjnych jako ważnego zjawiska historycznego i społeczno-kulturowego. Opisując „ruch na rzecz sportów i gier tradycyjnych” – jego formy organizacyjne i pewne kluczowe idee – autorzy starają się ukazać, jak ważne dla każdej społeczności ludzkiej są poszczególne lokalne i narodowe dziedzictwa kultury fizycznej. Procesy związane z globalizacją, które dotyczą nie tylko sfer ekonomicznej czy politycznej, ale także kulturowej i etnicznej, powodują, że ludzie odczuwają potrzebę świadomości własnego dziedzictwa i tożsamości. Częścią tej tożsamości są różnorodne formy własnej, rdzennej aktywności fizycznej. W tym artykule autorzy ukazują najpierw ogólną, współczesną sytuację sportów tradycyjnych w globalizującym się świecie, stanowiącym społeczno-kulturowy kontekst, w którym one egzystują. Opisują w tym celu wybrane przykłady tego typu sportów i inicjatyw z nimi związanych z całego świata. Następnie skupiają się na szczególnym wydarzeniu sportowym – 5. Igrzyskach Sportu dla Wszystkich – podczas którego sporty i gry tradycyjne są rozgrywane i promowane, ukazując funkcjonowanie tego typu sportów jako potencjalnie skutecznych narzędzi służących promowaniu wymiany międzykulturowej i zachowywaniu dziedzictwa kulturowego we współczesnym świecie.

Słowa kluczowe: globalizacja, tożsamość kulturowa, sporty i gry tradycyjne, społeczno-kulturowe wartości sportu, Światowe Igrzyska Sportu dla Wszystkich