

Methodological Dysfunctionalism and E-sports: A New Analytical Approach Application Perspective

Dysfunkcjonalizm metodologiczny i e-sport: możliwości zastosowania nowej propozycji analitycznej

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Abstract

The article is part of a new trend of interdisciplinary research on the sporting nature of the organized competitive playing of video games. Methodological dysfunctionalism is a recently formulated analytical perspective that facilitates the social assessment of a given activity in terms of its sporting status. The researcher, starting from a specific definition of sport, focuses on five basic dysfunctions that contradict sports values, which are indicators of the collective definition of a given activity as sports: doping, corruption, politicization, commercialization and mediatization. The article confronts the concept of methodological dysfunctionalism with one of the newest and fastest growing phenomena of postmodern culture – electronic sport.

Abstrakt

Artykuł wpisuje się w nowy nurt interdyscyplinarnych badań nad sportowym charakterem zorganizowanego współzawodnictwa w grach wideo. Dysfunkcjonalizm metodologiczny jest sformułowaną niedawno perspektywą analityczną, ułatwiającą społeczną ocenę danej aktywności pod kątem jej

sportowego statusu. Badacz, wychodząc od konkretnej definicji sportu, skupia się na pięciu podstawowych dysfunkcjach zaprzeczających sportowym wartościom, będących wskaźnikami kolektywnego definiowania danej działalności jako sportowej: dopingu, korupcji, polityzacji, komercjalizacji i mediatyzacji. W artykule skonfrontowano koncepcję dysfunkcjonalizmu metodologicznego z jednym z najnowszych i najszybciej rozwijających się fenomenów ponowoczesnej kultury – sportem elektronicznym (e-sportem).

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Émile Durkheim considered society as a complex structure, the stability of which is secured through social institutions – superordinate customs that underlie social life and organise fundamental human activities (e.g., work, family, religion, or sports). Institutions are characterised by varying practices based on more permanent systems of values. Social interactions involve the identification of statements, behaviours, and symbols and the testing of various procedures, which leads to the establishment of cultural models. The creation, expression, and strengthening of societally recognised values, norms, and practices takes place through institutionalization¹.

One of the characteristics of institutions is their usefulness: they fulfil basic societal needs. The usefulness of sports lies, among others, in the fact that it shapes and popularises particular values and the resulting models of behaviour. This is best exemplified by the Olympic movement, which is a grand reservoir of sports axioms. The notion of fair play, known throughout the world, means not only honest competition in sports, but also mutual respect and fulfilling one's duties thoroughly. Another important function of sports is the creation and dissemination of culture and values, sometimes through art. For example, organised football fans support (match choreographies) plays a role in the establishment of the values, standards, and models that are important for the continuity and development of the fans' social world. Furthermore, fan groups share a clear need to create and express their local, regional, or national identity, which is part of the local beliefs, practices, and symbols².

As with a family, sports can also become pathological and dysfunctional. Jakub Stempień formulated the concept of methodological dysfunctionalism, which constitutes a new analytical proposal with the aim of assessing an activity in terms of its sports character and, as a result, confirming or rejecting its status in sports. Stempień's concept assumes that the negative (dysfunctional) phenomena observed in sports are indicators of the sports functionality of a given activity, which is reconstructed in social consciousness. According to Stempień, these indicators are doping, corruption, politicization, commercialization, and mediatisation.

¹ É. Durkheim, *Zasady metody socjologicznej*, Warsaw 2000, p. 76.

² M. Lenartowicz, J. Mosh, *Stadiony i widowiska. Społeczne przestrzenie sportu*, Warsaw 2018, p. 137.

Stempień deliberately avoids the term *social pathology*, because it denotes not only the breaching of values and standards, but also the social repercussions (formal and informal sanctions) that result from such a breach. Consequently, *pathology* can refer to such phenomena as doping and corruption, but not the widely accepted or at least tolerated and often unavoidable processes of mediatisation, commercialization, and politicization. Using the term *pathology* would exclude the phenomena that are harmful for sports and negate its essence – its basic ideas and values – in addition to simply narrowing the scope of the analysis. According to Stempień, a more useful term is *dysfunction*, in the sense proposed by Robert Merton³. The term denotes an incorrect functioning of a given structure, the aim of which is to carry out the goals determined by values and the needs of the superior structure it co-creates⁴. This article applies Stempień terminology, which is key for the theoretical foundations of his concept. The article then juxtaposes the terminology against one of the latest and fastest growing phenomena of postmodern culture: electronic sports (or e-sports).

Methodological dysfunctionism has been created to contribute to the discussion on the sports status of organised intellectual competitions, which the Polish law has considered as a sport since 2017. Examples include chess, bridge, Scrabble, draughts, and e-sports, i.e. competitive video gaming⁵.

In recent years, the subculture of video game fans and players has been growing worldwide. A prominent feature of this development are organised competitions, i.e., e-sports. The suffix “e”, from “electronic”, indicates a relationship with electronically processed images generated by a computer on the monitor, TV screen, or other multimedia device. In this case, *sports* denotes matches based on specific rules that are played to win and to achieve the best score possible⁶.

In 2017, *The Associated Press Stylebook*, a popular guide containing linguistic definitions and rules, unified the different terms for electronic sports, indicating *esports* as the preferred term. Many persons started following the recommendation fairly quickly. One of the popularisers of the term is Paul ‘Redeye’ Chaloner, an influential e-sports activists and author of the book *This is esports (and How to Spell it): An Insider’s Guide to the World of Pro Gaming*. Unifying the different spellings of an English term, including es-

³ See: R.K. Merton, *Teoria socjologiczna i struktura społeczna*, Warsaw 2002.

⁴ R. Stempień, *Dysfunkcjonalizm metodologiczny – nowa propozycja analityczna w socjologii sportu i jej zastosowanie na przykładzie szachów*, “Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej” 2020, No. 1, p. 167-168.

⁵ J.R. Stempień, op. cit., p. 163-164.

⁶ J. Hindin et al., *E-sports*, [in:] *Routledge Handbook of Global Sport*, (ed.) J. Nauright, S. Zipp, London 2020, p. 405.

ports, seems beneficial. However, the guidelines issued by Associated Press are not binding for Polish or many other languages. In 2019, the Council for the Polish Language (CPL) published an official statement underlining that the words containing the suffix *e*, such as *e-mail*, *e-podpis* (“e-signature”), *e-papieros* (“e-cigarette”), or, last but not least, *e-sport*, have been in use in the Polish language for only a short time. For this group of words, an atypical spelling has been adopted that draws from the original English spelling. Changing this rule in order to follow the varying spelling practices in English is unjustified. CPL continues to recommend *e-sport* as the preferred spelling. However, popular culture has adopted and popularised the *esport* spelling, which may lead to its legitimization and permanent establishment in the Polish language⁷.

When defined so broadly, today e-sports is an incredibly popular, deeply professionalised, and highly commercialised feature of the global sport-media landscape. (...) Most recently, e-sports events have drawn considerable interest from traditional sports and media corporations. (...) Besides media corporations, universities and institutions are also making their incursions into the field of electronic gaming. (...) Where e-sports fit relative to traditional sports is a matter of definition⁸.

This article is part of a broader discussion about the sports character of e-sports that is held not only in the social world of video game fans and players, but, recently, also among researchers. The concept of methodological dysfunctionality is an innovative approach, according to which the researcher begins with an appropriate definition of sports that invokes either the contextual⁹ option or structured contextualism¹⁰. If the analysed activity

⁷ M. Jasny, *Sportowy wymiar „maniaczenia” przy komputerze, czyli kształtowanie sprawności fizycznej w ramach treningu w e-sporcie*, [in:] *Sport w ponowoczesności: konteksty, perspektywy badawcze, narracje*, (ed.) D. Mańkowski, W. Woźniak, Gdansk 2019, p. 58-59.

⁸ J. Hindin et al., op. cit., p. 405-406.

⁹ The contextual option assumes that sports are socially defined, and it is society that is the most entitled to express their contextual nature. Sports are what a given society's discourse defines as such; P. Nosal, *Społeczne ujęcie sportu. (Trudne) definiowanie zjawiska i jego dyskurs*, “Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej” 2015, No. 2, p. 31-32.

¹⁰ Sports are a system of social practices that society defines as such. However, sports also have an established, universal structure, defined within a community as the fundamental common traits that are needed to call something a sport. These include: distinction from a broader social context, conventionality (being subject to rules and control), competitiveness, the performance of sports actions by individual and towards other individuals, and the physicality of the activity. P. Nosal, op. cit., p. 33-36.

(the potential sports activity) is shown to meet the assumed definitional criteria, the researcher then considers the five aforementioned dysfunctions that indicate the collective definition of the activity as a sports activity (doping, corruption, politicization, commercialization, and mediatisation)¹¹. This paper assumes, out of necessity without providing a detailed explanation, that from both the contextual perspective and the structured contextualism viewpoint, all e-sports competitions meet the definitional criteria (kinesthetic¹², cultural¹³, or both) and are socially defined as a sport. The subsequent part of this paper attempts to identify the aforementioned sports dysfunctions with regard to the cultural horizon of e-sports. The analysis focuses on doping, which, as Stempień emphasises, seems to be the only dysfunction typical of sports.

The researchers underline that the ban on doping in sport was introduced in a political context, and was the result of pressure put on the International Olympic Committee by the United States and other Western countries during the cold war. The pressure was incentivised by their representatives losing matches against sportspersons from beyond the Iron Curtain, who were suspected of boosting their performance with illegal pharmacological substances¹⁴. A breakthrough point in the collective memory of the sport community, leading to the development of an anti-doping system, came when many participants of the 1998 Tour de France were proven to have employed doping. These events led to the establishment of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in 1999.

E-sports lack the institutionalization of global sports such as football or the Olympic disciplines, instead having several international organizations competing for supremacy. As a result, there is no uniform, consistently applied anti-doping policy for competitive gaming¹⁵. A couple of international organisations (such as ESL Gaming or International Esports Federation) refer to the WADA regulations. In 2020, the Polish Anti-Doping Agency and two major e-sports associations signed a cooperation agreement to combat doping. So far, however, little is known about any general or specific definitions of the allowable and prohibited substances and methods, or any rulings concerning anti-doping testing. Doping in e-sports is a taboo subject, which

¹¹ J.R. Stempień, op. cit., p. 172.

¹² P. Nosal, op. cit., p. 34-36.

¹³ R. Giulianotti, *Prologue*, [in:] *Sport: A Critical Sociology*, (ed.) R. Giulianotti, Cambridge 2005, p. xii-xiii.

¹⁴ D. Malcolm, *Prohibition of Drugs*, [in:] *The SAGE Dictionary of Sport Studies*, (ed.) D. Malcolm, London 2008, p. 74-76.

¹⁵ K. Jonasson, J. Thiborg, *Electronic sport and its impact on future sport*, "Sport in Society" 2010, No. 2, p. 294.

makes any attempts at reconstructing the social assessment of this dysfunction hard.

The specificities of competitive gaming can be compared to those in archery, which, as with many e-sports, involves heightened stimulation and requires good hand-eye coordination, but in this case it is also an Olympic discipline. As a result, the World Archery federation respects all the provisions of WADA's anti-doping regulations.

In 2019, Geir Helgemo, the Norwegian World Bridge Champion who represented Monaco, was disqualified for a year as the result of doping. The World Bridge Federation (WBF) also stripped him of all titles he won in the year preceding the disqualification. During the World Championships in Orlando, Helgemo tested positive for trace amounts of Clomifene, a hormonal drug, and synthetic testosterone. The Norwegian bridge community was shocked by this decision. Allan Livegard, Secretary General of the Norwegian Bridge Federation, emphasised that the substances detected in Helgemo did not boost one's performance in bridge in any manner. However, these substances are listed among WADA's prohibited substances and methods, and the WBF is putting every effort into allowing bridge to become an Olympic discipline, which requires following the anti-doping regulations. A drug used to treat infertility in women and the synthetic testosterone likely did nothing to improve Helgemo's chances at the bridge championship, and he himself may have felt unjustly punished by the organisational policy. Nonetheless, his case exemplifies fairly well the differences in doping between competitions based on physical fitness and those based primarily on intellectual ability. Consequently, the e-sports community should expect a similar situation to occur.

Another primarily intellectual discipline that has simultaneously been recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as a sports discipline is chess. In 2015, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, President of the International Chess Federation (FIDE), announced its strict cooperation with WADA to better define doping with respect to competitive chess. Independently, the FIDE, as a member of the IOC, has been following anti-doping regulations since 1999, even though testing for prohibited substances in chess is limited and is conducted only during major tournaments, such as at the world championships. To date, no chess player has been proven to have used doping substances, although in 2008, the top Ukrainian grandmaster Vassily Ivanchuk caused a scandal by refusing to provide a urine sample for anti-doping testing. Discussions about doping in chess led to a study that confirmed that Methylphenidate, Modafinil and caffeine improved the performance of players from the experimental group, significantly shortening their reaction

time. However, the study also found that the players who took stimulants usually played more slowly, which limited the potential improvement in performance to situations where the players were not under time pressure. Consequently, the prolonged reflection time may have no benefit or may even harm a player's performance under time pressure¹⁶. In e-sports, as with chess (which Stempień analyzed from the viewpoint of methodological dysfunctionality), technological doping is a more serious problem than pharmacological doping¹⁷. However,

(...) e-sports differ from intellectual contests in that the kinesthetic ability of the player determines the outcome of the match. Compared to the intellectual contest of chess, where the movement of the piece is unrelated to the player's actions (e.g., a grandmaster could dictate orders to a stand-in with no difference in performance), the ability of an e-sport competitor to manipulate their avatar, select actions, or aim within a game will directly impact the result¹⁸.

If we assume e-sports to indeed be a sport, then it seems to be the most technology-dependent sports discipline in the world. We have to remember about distinguishing pharmacological doping from techno-doping, which in e-sports usually means cheats (breaking the rules set by the developer of a video game by modifying its mechanics). Techno-doping also means the illicit improvement of the peripherals used to play a video game¹⁹.

One of the most infamous cheaters, exposed in 2018, was Nikhil 'Forsaken' Kumawat, a Counter Strike player, who was caught using prohibited software during one of the major tournaments. The disqualified team terminated their contract with Kumawat, and the Esports Integrity Commission punished him with a five-year ban from participating in ESL tournaments. Repeated cheating is punishable with a lifetime ban, or a 'vac ban', from participation in any and all matches involving a given game, as opposed to the standard, temporary ban.

In 2019, the cyclist and YouTuber Cameron Jeffers was stripped of his British Cycling eRacing championship title due to the use of 'robo-doping', as he himself admitted. The participants in the race were top British cyclists who used stationary bicycles connected to the game Zwift, which simulated bicycle racing tracks in a virtual world. Jeffers's bicycle had been

¹⁶ Franke A.G. et al. (2017), Methylphenidate, modafinil, and caffeine for cognitive enhancement in chess: A double-blind, randomised controlled trial, "European Neuropsychopharmacology", no. 3(27), pp. 248-260.

¹⁷ J.R. Stempień, op. cit., p. 178.

¹⁸ J. Hindin et al., op. cit., p. 406.

¹⁹ See: P. Nosal, *Technologia i sport*, Gdansk 2014.

augmented in a manner that contravened the race regulations. Unlocking access to different bicycles in the game required a specific amount of time and effort. However, Jeffers circumvented this requirement with the help of a bot (a computer program that performs specific actions to imitate human behaviour). Ultimately, this doping (or techno-doping) scandal, typically for e-sports, was unrelated to any pharmacological intervention in the cyclist's body. However, according to WADA, doping encompasses any breach of the anti-doping regulations, which is not necessarily limited to the use of prohibited substances. Cheating in e-sports is mentioned much more frequently than doping substances.

An influential representative of the Chicago sociological school of thought Herbert Blumer assumed that a specific sociocultural definition, rather than a set of objective circumstances, shapes the nature of a phenomenon and determines society's attitude towards it and the actions that are undertaken to address it. Blumer expanded on the theory of social problems by distinguishing five stages of a collective definition that determines the fate of each problem (or dysfunction): 1) emergence of a social problem; 2) legitimisation of a social problem; 3) mobilisation of action; 4) formation of an official plan; and 5) implementation of the official plan²⁰. It is worth to apply Blumer's conceptual schema to the issue of doping in e-sports. The problem emerged (Stage One) in 2015, with the most infamous doping scandal in the history of competitive gaming (the Adderall scandal²¹). In 2015, the problem went through the subsequent stages of collective definition, which led to changes in one of the biggest tournament organisers (ESL) regulations (Stage Five). These developments paved the way to a new process of collective definition that could be re-initiated at any point in the future.

The corruption scandals facing the esports industry are similar to those being faced by (...) sports. Both doping and match-fixing have had a substantial impact on international sport. (...) Future regulation of the esports industry is inevitable if the games are going to take the next step towards being recognized alongside other more traditional sports²².

²⁰ H. Blumer, *Social Problems as Collective Behavior*, "Social Problems" 1971, No. 3, p. 298-306.

²¹ In an interview, Kory 'Semphis' Friesen, a Counter Strike player, admitted that during the finals of the 2015 Intel Extreme Masters in Katowice, he and his team were under the influence of Adderall (drug prescribed to patients with ADHD, improving awareness).

²² J.T. Holden, A. Kaburakis, R. Rodenberg, *The Future Is Now: Esports Policy Considerations and Potential Litigation*, "Journal of Legal Aspects of Sport" 2017, No. 1, p. 270.

The term *corruption* refers, among others, to abusing one's position in order to acquire material gains. Professional competitive gaming is a profitable activity. In 2019, the Arthur Ashe Stadium in New York, the primary venue of the US Open Tennis Championships, held the finals of the first world championships in the video game Fortnite, which has gained critical recognition fairly quickly since its launch in 2017. The winner, 16-year-old Kyle 'Bugha' Giersdorf, won a record-breaking sum of three million dollars (out of a pool of 30 million). A year after his historical triumph, Giersdorf again became the centre of the media's attention, this time as a result of a warning he received from the organisers of the Fortnite Champion Series tournament for attempting to fix matches with other players. Corruption in e-sports seems to be a problem, even though little is known about it. The most notorious corruption scandals took place in South Korea, the birthplace of e-sports. Many players were punished for match-fixing in Starcraft, including top players, such as Ma 'Savior' Jae Yoon or Lee 'Life' Seung Hyun. This is only one example showing that the lucrative branch of video games is fairly prone to corruption.

Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, appeared in the closing ceremony of the 2016 Rio Summer Olympic Games representing Tokyo, the host city of the 2020²³ games. Although there is nothing unusual about a premier featured in this way, what was perhaps unexpected was the role and appearance Abe adopted within the spectacular ceremonial. Following a formulaic, scene-setting promotional video for the Tokyo Olympic Games, in his guise as 'Abe Mario', the Japanese Prime Minister was doubtless placing his not inconsiderable political capital behind the Japanese computer game industry (Super Mario being part of the game stable of industry giant, Nintendo). He was also, perhaps, foretelling an increased role for eSport at the Tokyo Games whose slogan is "Discover Tomorrow"²⁴.

The increasing economic and social importance of the video game industry, including e-sports, comes with a growing likelihood of being used in political play, especially since the world's two largest video game markets are China and the US. Tencent, China's largest producer of games, which aims to monopolise the market in China, has come into conflict with the Chinese government. In 2018, the government withdrew the to sell the widely-anticipated game *Monster Hunter: World*, only a few days after the company had launched its WeGame distribution platform, created specifically for the game. This was not the only case of the Chinese government making it dif-

²³ Postponed to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

²⁴ D.L. Andrews, G. Ritzer, *Sport and presumption*, "Journal of Consumer Culture" 2017, No. 2, p. 364-365.

difficult for Tencent to make a profit from video games on the domestic market. The seemingly irrational actions on the part of the authorities were most likely political in nature. The games were based on South Korean licences, on which China at the time imposed unofficial sanctions due to an American anti-missile defence system being constructed there. Moreover, Marcella Szablewicz argues that “(...) live e-sports events in China are less about spectatorship than they are about creating a spectacle that presents a carefully crafted vision of Chinese politics, nationalism, and capitalist consumer culture”²⁵.

The commercialization of e-sports is progressing very rapidly. According to the Netherland market research company Newzoo, e-sports have been bringing in rapidly increasing revenue every year. In 2019, the global annual revenue amounts to over a billion dollars²⁶. E-sports attracts keen interest from bookmakers. “Due to the growth in the esports entertainment industry as well as advances in technology platforms, which have occurred within the last 20 years, there has been a tremendous growth in the gambling market centered on esports”²⁷. The largest part of income from e-sports comes from sponsorship deals (456.7 million dollars out of 1.1 billion dollars in 2019)²⁸. E-sports is becoming an increasingly popular target of investment on the part of not only IT or telecommunications companies, but also companies and persons that previously had not been associated with the video game industry, but have recently acknowledged its potential. Also, well known athletes (e.g., David Beckham or Michael Jordan; in Poland, e.g., Robert Lewandowski or Marcin Gortat) support and sponsor tournaments, organizations, teams and individual players or streamers.

The recent decades have shown the significance of the media in sports, with perhaps the best example being the ongoing mediatization of the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup. Min Xiao states that “(...) athletes who play traditional sports, such as football or basketball, create real-world outcomes (e.g., physical contact), while professional gamers create virtual outcomes (e.g., computer-mediated interactions)”²⁹. Brett Hutchins underlines that the “investigation of a super-abundant range of gaming activities is nec-

²⁵ M. Szablewicz, *A Realm of Mere Representation? “Live” E-Sports Spectacles and the Crafting of China’s Digital Gaming Image*, “Games and Culture” 2015, No. 3, p. 256.

²⁶ Newzoo, *2019 Esports Revenue Streams*, [in:] <https://newzoo.com/key-numbers/> (accessed 26 IX 2019).

²⁷ K. Sweeney, M.H. Tuttle, M.D. Berg, *Esports Gambling: Market Structure and Biases*, “Games and Culture” 2019, p. 2.

²⁸ Newzoo, op. cit. (accessed 26 IX 2019).

²⁹ M. Xiao, *Factors Influencing eSports Viewership: An Approach Based on the Theory of Reasoned Action*, “Communication & Sport” 2020, No. 1, p. 4.

essary if we are to understand an increasingly ‘mediatised’ social reality as it is becoming, as opposed to being blinded to this reality by former ways of thinking”³⁰. Assuming that e-sports is indeed a sport, it seems to be the most mediatised sport in the world.

(...) eSport represents a prophetic vision of a rapidly approaching future (...), one in which the boundaries between material and digital realms are blurred (...). Professional eSport athletes – sometimes referred to as cyber-athletes – are pivotal figures within the cultural economy of eSport and can be considered as embodied brands whose intertextually mediated persona helps fan audience interest in themselves, the games and tournaments they play, and the products they are sponsored by³¹.

The development of technology and media has expanded people’s interest to include e-sports, regardless of whether it is legitimised as a sport discipline or not. E-sport represents a form of ‘sportification’, where the term means

to either: (a) view, organize or regulate a non-sport activity in such a way that it resembles a sport and allows a fair, pleasurable, and safe environment for individuals to compete and cooperate, and compare their performances to each other, and future and past performances; or (b) add a sport component to an existing activity in order to make it more attractive to its audiences³².

The analysis presented in this paper argues that e-sports involve similar problems to those occurring in traditional sports, conventional Olympic disciplines, or sports such as football or cycling. The above-mentioned cases clearly show that organized competitive playing of video games involves all of the most significant dysfunctions characteristic of sports (doping, corruption, politicization, commercialization, and mediatisation). Consequently, from the viewpoint of methodological dysfunctionality, e-sport should be acknowledged as sport. The analysis also confirms the usefulness of the approach proposed by Stempień, who himself recommends testing it.

Joseph Maguire distinguished five phases of ‘sportisation’ in the institutionalisation of sport. The first and second phases are limited to the phenomena observed in British sport between the 17th and 19th centuries. The third phase is the onset of the globalisation of sport and encompasses the turn of the 19th and 20th century, when the forms of sport developed in Great Britain spread to the rest of Europe and the former British colonies and other

³⁰ B. Hutchins, *Signs of meta-change in second modernity: the growth of e-sport and the World Cyber Games*, “New Media & Society” 2008, No. 6, p. 852.

³¹ D.L. Andrews, G. Ritzer, op. cit., p. 364-365.

³² B. Heere, *Embracing the sportification of society: Defining e-sports through a polymorphic view on sport*, “Sport Management Review” 2018, No. 1, p. 23.

dependent states. In the fourth phase, between the 1920s and the 1960s, the increasingly internationalised forms of sport gained a new centre, in the US. This helped to popularise such disciplines as baseball, basketball, ice hockey and volleyball. In the fifth phase, between the 1960s and 1990s, globalised sport grew to include all disciplines originating from Eastern martial arts and gymnastic systems³³. According to Maguire's concept, the potential (or inevitable) recognition of e-sports in the 21st century with a new centre in the Far East (e.g., China) or the US could be interpreted as the beginning of the sixth phase of 'sportisation'.

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³³ See: J. Maguire, *Sport, Identity Politics and Globalization*, [in:] *Globalization: Critical Concepts in Sociology*, (ed.) R. Robertson, K.E. White, London-New York 2003.

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