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Physical activity of Ukrainian people interned in camps on the territory of the province of Łódź in the years 1920–1938

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Aktywność fizyczna ludności ukraińskiej internowanej w obozach na terenie województwa łódzkiego w latach 1920–1938

Streszczenie

Po zawieszeniu broni między Polską a Rosją w październiku 1920 r., żołnierze Ukraińskiej Republiki Ludowej, przekraczając granicę Polski, zostali rozbrojeni i osadzeni w obozach dla internowanych. W 1921 r. do obozów na terenie województwa łódzkiego w Kaliszu-Szczypiornie, Piotrkowie Tryb. i Strzałkowie przybyło ponad 15 tys. Ukraińców. Obozy funkcjonowały do 1924 r., po ich likwidacji internowani uzyskali statut emigrantów politycznych. Część z nich wyjechała za granicę lub w inne rejony Polski, pozostający w Kaliszu zamieszkali w Stacji Ukraińskiej w Kaliszu. Życie internowanych toczyło się w bardzo trudnych warunkach obozowych. Izolowani, poddani wrogiej agitacji władz bolszewickich, podjęli działania przywracające mobilizację narodowo-patriotyczną oraz zdrowotno-sportową. Działalność kulturalno-oświatową – obok teatrów, chórów, bibliotek, prasy – prowadziły szkoły. Ludność ukraińska uczęszczała do obozowych (ukraińskich) i polskich szkół. W ramach programu uczestniczyła w zajęciach z wychowania fizycznego. W obozach rozwinął się wspomagany przez amerykańską YMCA ruch sportowy. Prezentowany poziom

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sportowy uniemożliwił rywalizację z czołowymi drużynami w regionie. Zajęcia sportowe, poza oddziaływaniem prozdrowotnym, integrowały środowisko ukraińskie.

Słowa kluczowe: internowani, żołnierze ukraińscy, wychowanie fizyczne, sport, województwo łódzkie.

Abstract

After the truce between Poland and Russia had been signed in October 1920, the soldiers of the Ukrainian People's Republic who crossed the Polish border were first disarmed and then imprisoned in internment camps. In 1921 over 15 000 people were sent to camps on the territory of the province of Łódź, namely to Kalisz-Szczypiorno, Piotrków Trybunalski and Strzałkowo. The camps functioned until 1924 and after their liquidation, the internees had to leave the territory of Poland or, after obtaining the status of political immigrants, they were granted a permit to stay. Those who stayed settled in Kalisz, in the so-called Ukrainian Stanitsa. They lived in shabby conditions. However, although isolated and subjected to hostile agitation by Bolshevik authorities, they managed to restore their patriotic and national spirit as well as their sports and health character. Cultural and educational activity, apart from theatres, choirs, libraries, the press was run primarily by schools. The Ukrainian people attended both camp (Ukrainian) schools and Polish schools where they participated in PE classes as part of the curriculum. Moreover, the sports movement developed, supported by the American YMCA association. Their sports level made it possible to compete with the leading regional teams. Sports Activities, apart from their pro-health impact, integrated the Ukrainian community.

Keywords: the interned, soldiers of the Ukrainian People's Republic, physical education (PE), sport, the Province of Łódź.

Introduction

This article aims to present forms of physical activities which were undertaken by Ukrainian soldiers kept in camps in 1920 prepared for them, a.o. in the territory of the Province of Łódź which the Kalisz County was part of after Poland regained independence. The beginning of the period of my research was marked by the arrival of the first groups while the ending – 1938 – by locating the Kalisz County along with Ukrainian Stanitsa in the Poznań Province due to the administrative reform.

Research methods and problems

The circumstances of interning Ukrainian soldiers in camps on the territory of the Province of Łódź have already been analysed by both Polish and Ukrainian researchers¹. However, the research problem formulated in the title of this article

¹ A. Kolańczyk, *Internowani żołnierze armii UNR w Kaliszu 1920–1939 [The internedsoldiers of Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) army in Kalisz 1920–1939]*, Kalisz – Przemyśl – Lviv,

has been either treated merely as a contribution or neglected. It has to be mentioned though that the author of this article does not claim the right to fully present the title problem.

1995; A. *Ukraińcy i ich życie w Kaliszu w latach 1920–1939* [*Ukrainians and their life in Kalisz In the years 1920–1939*], [in:] *Kalisz miasto otwarte* [*Kalisz – an open town*], ed. K. Walczak, E. Andrysiak, Kaliskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, Kalisz 2006, p. 80–95; Z. Karpus, *Jeńcy i internowani rosyjscy i ukraińscy na terenie Polski w latach 1918–1924* [*Captives, as well as Russians and Ukrainians interned on the territory of Poland in the years 1918–1924*], Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 1997; E. Wiszka, *Prasa obozowa żołnierzy armii Ukraińskiej Republiki Ludowej internowanych w Kaliszu i Szczypiornie w latach 1920–1924* [*Camp press of Ukrainian People's Republic army soldiers interned in Kalisz and Szczypiorno in the years 1920–1924*, “Rocznik Kaliski” [“Kalisz Yearbook”] 1996/1997, v. 26, pp. 153–168; K. Paszkiewicz, *Szkolnictwo i oświata wojsk Ukraińskiej Republiki Ludowej internowanych w Polsce w latach 1920–1924* [*Schooling and education of Ukrainian Peoples' Republic soldiers interned in Poland In the years 1920–1924*], [in:] *Polska i Ukraina* [*Poland and Ukraine*], ed. Z. Karpus, W. Rezmer, E. Wiszka, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń 1997, pp. 329–334; A. Roth, *Obóz i Stanitsa ukraińska w Kaliszu po I wojnie światowej* [*The camp and Ukrainian Stanitsa in Kalisz after the Great War*], “Kronika Wielkopolski” [“Chronicles of Wielkopolska”] 2000, no. 2, pp. 55–69; M. Jarecki, *Kartka z dziejów ukraińskiej emigracji w Kaliszu w połowie lat trzydziestych XX* [*A page of the Ukrainian immigration history in Kalisz in mid-thirties of 20th c.*, “Gazeta Kaliska” journal, 2004/2005, v. 30, pp. 101–112; A. Roth, *Ukraińcy w Kaliszu* [*Ukrainians in Kalisz*], “Kalisia Nowa” 2007, no. 11–12, pp. 12–16; B. Czerniak, R. Czerniak, *Obóz jeńców i internowanych pod Strzałkowem* [*The camp of the interned captives near Strzałkowo*], Muzeum Regionalne w Słupcy [Regional Museum in Słupca], Słupca 2006; B. Czerniak, R.M. Czerniak, *Obóz jeńców wojennych i internowanych pod Strzałkowem 1914–1918, 1919–1924* [*The camp of war captives and the Internet near Strzałkowo 1914–1918, 1919–1924*], Wydawnictwo Kropka J.W. Śliwczynscy, Strzałkowo 2013; W. Olszewski, *Jeńcy i internowani zmarli w obozie Strzałkowo w latach 1915–1921* [*Captives and the Interned who died in Strzałkowo camp In the years 1915–1921*], Oficyna Wydawnicza Rytm, Warszawa 2012. I. Срібняк [I. Sribniak], *Національно-патріотична та спортивно-оздоровча мобілізація вояцтва у таборі інтернованих військ УНР Сташково (Польща) у 1921–1922 рр.: Форми і методи*, [Nacjonalno-patriotyczna ta sportywno-ozdorowcza mobilizacja wojaictwa u tabori internowanych vijisk UNR Staszkowo (Polsza) u 1921–1922 rr.: Formy i metody] [*National patriotic and health mobilization of soldiers in Ukrainian People's Republic interment camp in Staszów (Poland) in the years 1921–1922. Forms and methods*] “Ідеологія і Політика” [“Ideologija i Politika”] [“Ideology and Politics”] 2018, no 2(10), pp. 131–146; Н. Сидоренко [N. Sydorenko], *Національно-духовне самоствердження, ч. 2: Преса інтернованих українців та цивільної еміграції (Чехія, Польща, Румунія, Єгипет, 1919–1924)* [*Nacjonalno-duchowne samostwierdżennia, cz. 2: Presa internowanych ukrajijinców ta cywilnoji emigraciji (Czechija, Polska, Rumunija, Egipt, 1919–1924)*] [*National and spirituals acceptance, part 2: The press of the Internet Ukrainians and citizen immigration (Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Egipt 1919–1924)*], Kiev 2000; М. Павленко [M. Pawlenko], *Українськїв іїсько вополонені й інтерновані у таборах Польщі, Чехословаччинита Румунії: ставленнявлади і умовперебування (1919–1924)* [*Ukrajinski wijskowopolonieni i internowani u taborach Polsi, Chechosłowaczczyny ta Rumuniji: stawlennjawlady i umowy perebywannja (1919–1924)*] [*Ukrainian war captives and the interned in camps of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania – authority relations and socialconditions*], Kiev 1992.

Methods such as induction, deduction, synthesis and comparative methods were used in this research. The source material were the archives, press and literature sources. The following research problems were formulated:

1. What conditions determined sports activity?
2. What forms of physical activity did the Ukrainian people practise in the internment camps?

Results and discussion

The Province of Łódź was constituted by the Temporary Act of August 2, 1919. It encompassed 13 counties with Łódź as the place of residence of the authorities of the Province². The most important revision of the borders of the province took place in 1938 when the counties of Kalisz, Koło, Konin and Turek were transferred to the Poznań Province³ and the counties of Kutno, Łowicz, Skiernewice and Rawa as well as Końskie⁴ and Opoczno were incorporated⁵ the province of Łódź, which was of agricultural and industrial character (textile industry was predominant). It was determined by national and social diversification⁶. The first general census of 1921 distinguished the following nations out of 2 252 769 inhabitants of the province: Poles – 81%, Jews – 12 %, Germans – 4,6% and a few less numerous nations, such as Czechs, Russians, Ruthenians (Ukrainians), Belarussians, Lithuanians and others. In 1921 Ukrainian (Ruthenian)⁷ nationality was

² M. Bandurka, *Zmiany administracyjne i terytorialne ziem województwa łódzkiego XIX i XX wieku* [Administrative and territorial changes of the Province of Łódź In the 19th and 20th century], PWN, Warszawa 1974. These included the following counties: Brzeziny, Kalisz, Koło, Konin, Łask, Łęczyca, Łódź, Piotrków, Sieradz, Radomsko, Słupca, Turek and Wieluń.

³ M. Bandurka, *Rozwój administracyjno-terytorialny powiatu kaliskiego oraz powiatów sąsiednich w XIX i XX wieku (do 1945 roku)* [Administrative and territorial development of the Kalisz County and the neighbouring counties in the 19th and 20th century (until 1945)], „Rocznik Kaliski” [“Kalisz Yearbook”] 1976, v. 9, 1976, pp. 185–213.

⁴ Excluding: Bliżyn, Skarżysko-Kamienna and Szydłowiec.

⁵ *Województwo łódzkie w XXX-leciu PRL* [Łódź Province in 30 years of Polish People's Republic (PRL)], Wojewódzki Urząd Statystyczny w Łodzi [Voivodeship Statistics in Łódź], Łódź 1974, p. 7.

⁶ A. Rzepkowski, *Struktura społeczna mieszkańców województwa łódzkiego w świetle powszechnych spisów ludności w 1921 i 1931 r.* [Social structure of residents of the Province of Łódź in the light of censuses in 1921 i 1931 r.], „Przegląd Nauk Historycznych” [“Review of Historical Sciences”] 2012, 11(1), p. 30.

⁷ A. Rzepkowski, *Skład narodowościowy, wyznaniowy i językowy ludności województwa łódzkiego w II Rzeczypospolitej* [National, religious and language structure of the residents of the Province of Łódź in the Second Republic of Poland], „Przegląd Nauk Historycznych” [“Review of Historical Sciences”] 2011, 10(2), p.135. During the 1921 census the Ukrainians were referred to as Ruthenians. The term “Ukrainian” referred to people living on the territory of Ukraine during its territorial affiliation to Russia.

declared by 846 people⁸. It soon changed reasonably, because in October 1920 a truce between Poland and Russia was proclaimed in Riga. As a result of the truce between Poland and the Ukrainian People's Republic (URL) was undone. Then the bereft troops of URL, forced by Bolshevik army, passed onto the territory of Poland.

Here, The Ukrainian soldiers, were disarmed by Polish army and interned in several camps in Aleksandrów Kujawski, Wadowice, Piotrków Kujawski, Pikulice, Łańcut, Strzałkowo and Kalisz. In December 1921 all the interned soldiers and civilians – 15 326 – were sent to camps on the territory of the Province of Łódź. 8454 of them were sent to Kalisz and Szczypiorno, 372 to Piotrków Trybunalski and 6500 to Strzałkowo.

The soldiers and their families, as well as civilians, teachers, doctors, students, writers and artists among them lived in shabby conditions. Their number decreased as a result of the living conditions as well as due to Bolshevik agitating activities, amnesties proclaimed by Bolshevik authorities and emigration to the West and, in many cases, because they assimilated with Polish society. The growing downward trend in the number of internees resulted in the closure of the camps on August 31, 1924⁹. Those who stayed in Poland, higher – rank officers, the sick, invalids, the old, got the status of political immigrants and lived in Kalisz Ukrainian Stanitsa (1924–1939)¹⁰. In 1920, the interned Ukrainians were sent to the internment camps of the Great War (Kalisz, Szczypiorno¹¹, Strzałkowo¹²). Unfortunately, there is no possibility to locate the Internment Camp no. 11 in Piotrków Trybunalski. Hence, it is impossible to estimate the living conditions there. It arises from the scraps of information that some of the internees lived at 13, Krakowska Street (now it is Krakowskie Przedmieście¹³).

⁸ *Pierwszy powszechny spis Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Mieszkania. Ludność. Stosunki zawodowe. Województwo łódzkie* [The first generalcensus of the Republic of Poland. People. Flats. Trade relations. The Province of Łódź], "Statystyka Polski" ["Statistics of Poland"] 1928, v. 16, pp. 3, 79–80.

⁹ Z. Karpus, *Stanitsa Ukraińska w Kaliszu. Centrum ukraińskiego życia społeczno-wojskowego na emigracji w Polsce w latach 1924–1939* [Ukrainian Stanitsa in Kalisz. Ukrainian centre of social and military life on immigration in Poland in years 1924–1939], [in:] *Na przełomie stuleci. Naród, kościół, państwo w XIX i XX wieku. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Profesorowi Ryszardowi Benderowi z okazji 65 rocznicy urodzin* [At the turn of centuries. Nation, church and country in XIXth and XXth c. Jubilee book dedicated to Professor Ryszard Bender on 65th birth anniversary], Lublin 1997, p. 408.

¹⁰ Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe (CAW), Sprzymierzona Armia Ukraińska-Ministerstwo Spraw Wojskowych, sygn. 27: Memoriał Centralnego Komitetu Ukraińskiego w Polsce w sprawie Stancji ukraińskiej w Kaliszu z 1938 r. [Central Military Archive in Warsaw: Allied Ukrainian Army – the Ministry of Military Affairs, sign. 27: A memorial of the Central Ukrainian Committee in Poland on the issue of Ukrainian Stanitsa in Kalisz of 1938].

¹¹ A. Kolańczyk, *Internowani żołnierze armii UNR...* [The interned soldiers of Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR)...], p. 3.

¹² W. Olszewski, *Jeńcy i internowani...* [Captives and the interned...], p. 5.

¹³ Archiwum Państwowe (AP) w Piotrkowie Trybunalskim, Starostwo Powiatowe Piotrkowskie, sygn. 171: Utworzenie kaplicy dla internowanych w Piotrkowie żołnierzy ukraińskich – kore-

The camps were semi-open. As a result, their residents found employment in nearby towns and farms. The wages improved their bad financial situation, though one has to remember that the established food rations were impossible to fulfil the demands for a long time.

The economical collapse of Poland after the Great War caused shortages, both for the soldiers and for civilians¹⁴ not only in food but clothes, shoes and fuel as well. The food crisis began to step down only in 1921. Apart from a diet, the state of health was also determined by conditions of accommodation. Overcrowded, cold shanties were the source of diseases like typhoid or dysentery.

The sanitary and epidemiological situation in Strzałkowo and Kalisz camps was bad, although preventive activities were undertaken, like the ones in Strzałkowo in August 1920. Captain Władysław Gabler was appointed the commander of the hospital and managed to limit the spread of infectious diseases by separating the sick and increasing the number of beds¹⁵. Despite the improvement of the conditions the reports reveal a very poor living situation in the camps.

In the post-inspection report of 1936 we can read: “[...] the rooms, where they reside are against all hygienic standards. The ceilings are leaking, wooden walls are the home for vermin. In the majority of inspected flats, it is cold and damp. Two or more people sleep in one bed, the healthy with the sick...”¹⁶.

The camp medical personnel watched the state of health of the interned people. The number of sick balanced between several and several dozen per cent due to the introduction of vaccinations against infectious diseases¹⁷. Sometimes, how-

spondencja, 1921, k. 2: Do Starostwa w Piotrkowie, Piotrków 19.IV.21 r. [National Archive in Piotrków Trybunalski, Piotrków County Office, sign. 171: Creation of a chapel for the interned Ukrainian soldiers in Piotrków – correspondence, 1921, p. 2: To Piotrków County Office, Piotrków April 19, 1921].

¹⁴ I. Срібняк [I. Sribniak], „Несемо ми хрест... в терновім вінку колючих дровів...” (інтерновані воїяки-українці в таборі Стшалково, Польща у 1922–1923 рр.), „Київські історичні студії: науковий журнал” (“Nesemo my chrest... v ternowim winku koljucznych drotiv...”) (internowani wojacy-ukrainci w tabor i Stszalkowo, Polska u 1922–1923 rr.), “Kijowski historyczni studii: naukowy żurnal” [“We carry a cross... a thorny wreath of barbedwire...”] (interned soldiers in camps in Strzałkowo, Poland in years 1922–1923)] 2018, no 1(6), p. 32.

¹⁵ B. Czerniak, R.M. Czerniak, *Obóz jeńców wojennych i internowanych...* [The camp of war captives and the interned...], p. 17.

¹⁶ CAW, Oddział II Sztabu Głównego z lat 1921–1939, sygn. I.303.4.5669, Sprawozdanie z lustracji Ukraińskiej Stanicy pod Kaliszem przeprowadzonej dnia 28 i 29 stycznia 1936 roku, k. 46 [Central Military Archive, II Division of the Main Military Staff (General) in years 1921–1939, sign. I.303.4.5669. A report on the inspection of Ukrainian Stanitsa near Kalisz held on January 28 and January 29, 1936, p. 46].

¹⁷ AP w Piotrkowie Tryb., Katalog wystawy „Ukraińskie ślady na ziemi piotrkowskiej. Dokumenty z zasobów Archiwum Państwowego w Piotrkowie Trybunalskim”, Piotrków Tryb., 2018, k. brak [National Archive in Piotrków Tryb., Exhibitoncatalogue „Ukrainian traces in Piotrków area. Documents of resources of National Archive in Piotrków Trybunalski”, Piotrków Tryb., 2018. p. none]; I. Срібняк [I. Sribniak], „Несемо ми хрест...” [“We carry a cross...”], p. 33.

ever, their efforts were defeated by sanitary conditions. In the aforementioned post-inspection report it was noted in the description of the sick rooms: “[...] it happened that the sick lay naked, covered by shags with swarms of vermin, the insane are deprived of daylight because the only window in their shanty is tightly nailed with boards...”¹⁸.

After a relative improvement of camp living conditions in mid-1921, there were activities undertaken, which strengthened the moral attitude, national and patriotic, sports and health awareness. In every camp, there were various sections organized, such as: general, publishing, historical, visual arts, science, library and sports. Through organizing courses of reading and writing organizations and cultural societies eliminated illiteracy. Libraries, choirs, theatres and publishing houses organized educational, cultural and publishing activities¹⁹.

Schools were one of the first cultural and educational centres. They were open in Kalisz, Szczypiorno and Strzałkowo. There were different levels of education in camps: primary, secondary and tertiary.

From 1921, there functioned a school for adults which in 1923 was transformed into the T. Szewczenko Ukrainian Secondary School²⁰. The school continued its activity after the camps were closed and the Ukrainian Stadnitsa was created²¹. Its graduates continued their education at universities in Poland and abroad, i.e. in Czechoslovakia, France or Germany. However, after a few years, there was a shortage of Ukrainian primary school (in 1925 – 108 boys and girls). That is why in 1926 they opened S. Petlura Primary School and in 1935 they created a seven-grade coeducational school with Ukrainian as the language of instruction²².

In Szczypiorno, in a scouts' boarding school (płastun school) orphans from all camps were collected (about 100 people). In 1921, Ukrainian People's Uni-

¹⁸ CAW, Oddział II Sztabu Głównego z lat 1921–1939, sygn. I.303.4.5669, Sprawozdanie z lustracji ..., k. 47 [Central Military Archive, II Division of the Main Military Staff (General) in years 1921–1939, sign. I.303.4.5669. A report on the inspection..., p. 47].

¹⁹ E. Wiszka, *Prasa obozowa żołnierzy armii Ukraińskiej Republiki Ludowej internowanych w Kaliszui Szczypiornie w latach 1920–1924* [Camp press of Ukrainian People's Republic army soldiers interned in Kalisz and Szczypiorno in years 1920–1924], “Rocznik Kaliski” [“Kalisz Yearbook”] 1996/1997, v. 26, p. 153–168; A. Kolańczyk, *Internowani żołnierze...* [The interned soldiers...], p. 12–58; B. Wojciechowska, *Bolszewicy pod Strzałkowem* [The Bolsheviks near Strzałkowo], p. 141.

²⁰ E. Wiszka, *Stanitsa ukraińska w Kaliszu (1924–1939)* [Ukrainian Stanitsa in Kalisz (1924–1939)], [in:] *Polska. Ukraina. Osadczuk* [Poland. Ukraine. Osadczuk], ed. B. Berdychowska, O. Hnatiuk, M. Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin 2007, p. 159.

²¹ С. Наріжний (S. Narižnyj), *Українська еміграція культурна праця української еміграції між двома світовими війнами* [Ukrainian immigration, a cultural act of Ukrainian immigration between two world wars], Prague 1942, p. 49; AP w Kaliszu, Starostwo Powiatowe w Kaliszu [National Archive in Kalisz, Kalisz County Office], sign.187, p. 16, Ukrainians' problems...

²² E. Wiszka, *Stanitsa ukraińska...* [Ukrainian Stanitsa...], p. 163.

versity was relocated from Łańcut to Strzałkowo, with 758 students and four faculties: economics, mathematics and nature, history and philosophy and military science (235 people)²³.

In the same year, with the help of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), they started a sports secondary school.

The state of Ukrainian education was not far from their general living conditions in the camp. Working in Ukrainian schools as well as learning there made the financial situation of teachers and students deteriorate because they were deprived of any possibility of extra paid jobs and they had to rely only on camp rations.

The curriculum in Ukrainian schools was similar to the one in Polish schools. Extracurricular subjects were the Ukrainian language and the history and geography of Ukraine.

Classes were held in Ukrainian. Lack of finance and later on the shortage of teachers negatively influenced camp schooling. Nevertheless, school inspectors expressed positive opinions on the activity of the school in Stanitsa in the years 1925–1927²⁴.

Unfortunately, in the mid-1930s this required state continued to deteriorate. Schools in shanties did not meet the required conditions for school premises. That was the most probable reason for low attendance. There were only 50 students in the Stanitsa school where classes were attended by 5–7 children on average²⁵. Most kids (about 170) went to Polish schools. It resulted in giving up their education in Ukrainian as their first language²⁶.

²³ K. Paszkiewicz, *Szkolnictwo i oświata wojsk Ukraińskiej Republiki Ludowej internowanych w Polsce w latach 1920–1924* [Schooling and education of Ukrainian Peoples' Republic soldiers interned in Poland in years 1920–1924], [in:] *Polska i Ukraina* [Poland and Ukraine], ed. Z. Karpus, W. Rezmer, E. Wiszka, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń 1997, p. 329–334; A. Kolańczyk, *Internowani żołnierze...* [The interned soldiers...], p. 12–13; A. Roth, *Obóz i Stanitsa ukraińska...*, "Kronika Wielkopolski" [A camp and Ukrainian Stanitsa...], "Chronicles of Wielkopolska" 2000, no. 2, p. 62.

²⁴ Archiwistyka społeczna, „Polsko-ukraińskie braterstwo broni w 1920 r. Spuścizna dra Aleksandra Kolańczuka”, *Do W. Pana Inspektora Szkolnego pow. Kaliskiego (26 listopad 1927 r.)*, 2012, http://www.pwin.pl/Archiwistyka_spol/arch_spol.html [Social archival science “Polish-Ukrainian army brotherhood in 1920. Heritage of Aleksander Kolańczyk, PhD”, *To School Inspector of Kaliski county (November 26, 1927)*, http://www.pwin.pl/Archiwistyka_spol/arch_spol.html].

²⁵ CAW, Oddział II Sztabu Głównego (Generalnego) z lat 1921–1939, sygn. I.303.4.5669, k. 87,96, Protokół z konferencji odbytej w dniu 2 kwietnia 1936 r. w sprawie zmian organizacyjnych Stanicy Ukraińskiej pod Kaliszem; k. 47, Sprawozdanie z lustracji Ukraińskiej Stanicy pod Kaliszem (1936 r.) [Central Military Archive, II Division of the Main Military Staff (General) in years 1921–1939, sign. I.303.4.5669, p. 87, 96. Minutes of a conference of April 2, 1936 on organizational changes in Ukrainian Stanitsa near Kalisz; p. 47, A report on Ukrainian Stanitsa inspection near Kalisz (1936)]; AP w Poznaniu [National Archive in Poznań], sign. 155, k. 1–27.

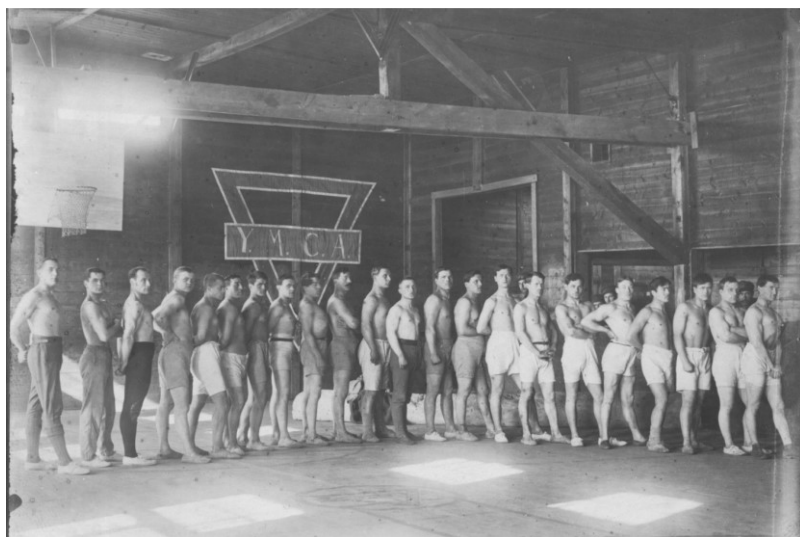
²⁶ *Dziennik Urzędowy Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego Łódzkiego z dnia 20 lutego 1929 r.*, [Official Gazette of Local Educaiton Authority of the School Region in Łódź of February 20, 1929], No 2, pp. 47–60.

Instead, Ukrainian children attended better-equipped Polish schools in Kalisz. It also concerned PE classes and the possibility of participating in student sports clubs²⁷.

The residual character of archive sources does not allow to present the full picture of PE classes in camp schools. The preserved report of 1937/1938 reports that in the Ukrainian primary school (Ukrainian Stanitsa) body exercises of 2 hours a week were conducted in a recreational room by Stefan Kość-Kostenko²⁸.

We can find very interesting information on a sports secondary school in Strzałkowo in 1921. It was established thanks to material and programming support of the American YMCA organization. Photographs kept in the Regional Museum of Słupca document training classes in 1922. They also depict the outlook of the so-called exercise house organized in one of the camp shanties.

Practising was based on American curriculum. Classes lasted till late hours in the evening (10 pm). Students (400, 25 women team among them) were taught elements of athletics, general and equipment gymnastics, wrestling (American and French), jiu-jitsu, weight lifting, fencing, tennis, basketball and football²⁹.



Pic. 1. YMCA gym in the internment camp in Strzałkowo (March 1st, 1922)

Source: Regional Museum of Słupca.

²⁷ J. Jaroszewski, *Wychowanie fizyczne, higiena oraz sport szkolny w szkołach na terenie powiatu kaliskiego w latach 1918–1939* [Physical education, hygiene and sport in schools on the territory of Kaliski county in years 1918–1939], [in:] *Rola elit społecznych w ochronie dziedzictwa kulturowego w społecznościach lokalnych* [The role of social elites in the protection of cultural heritage in local societies], ed. S. Kowalska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań 2010, pp. 37–56.

²⁸ AP w Poznaniu, Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego Poznańskiego, sygn. 155, k. 9, 20–121, 26–27, Sprawozdanie z organizacji 1937/38 [National Archive in Poznań, Education Authority of Poznań school region, sign. 155, p. 9, 20–121, 26–27, A report of organization of 1937/38].

²⁹ С. Наріжний (S. Narižnyj), *Українська еміграція...* [Ukrainian immigration...], p. 42.

The equipment and sports clothes were delivered by the YMCA. The participants tried to make up for the lacking equipment on their own. In the picture, you can see kettlebells and axels. After closing down the camp in Strzałkowo, the YMCA mission was relocated with the interned people to scouts' school (płastun school) in Szczypiorno. There, apart from obligatory subjects, they put special attention to military training and physical education. It was YMCA again which equipped the school. An instructor of gymnastics, volleyball, basketball, football, athletics and boxing was employed.



Pic. 2. A group of men practising in the gym (March 1st, 1922)

Source: Regional Museum of Słupca.

You did not have to wait long for the results. After several months, Ukrainian scouts competed against their peers from Kalisz schools³⁰. Sports activity complemented cultural, educational and artistic classes in the military environment. It integrated the Ukrainian community. It heated readiness for action and stabilized the emotional state of the interned soldiers for whom the active way of life was of great importance. The greatest sports impulse integrating the Ukrainian community were the contests, especially football matches. This kind of activity among the interned soldiers and school students was promoted by sports clubs. In Kalisz-Szczypiorno camp group, within the 2nd Wołyń Division, there was the

³⁰ O. Humeniuk, *Organizacje młodzieżowe w obozach dla internowanych z Armii Ukraińskiej Republiki Ludowej w Polsce* [Youth organizations in camps for the interned of Ukrainian People's Republic army in Poland], [in:] *Polska i Ukraina. Problemy i perspektywy* [Poland and Ukraine. Problems and perspectives], ed. M. Apollo, M. Krupska-Klimczak, University of Pedagogy, Kraków 2019, p. 394–395.

Officer Sports Group whereas gymnastics and fencing school was within the 3rd Armoured Division³¹. The members of “Zaporozec” Association and (Ukrainian) “Sokił”³².

Sports club members were recruited from among school students. There is no information from Strzałkowo about formal sports associations, the most common description is a “camp team” or YMCA.

The members of scouting (płastun) “Zaporozec” were students of the T. Szewczenko Secondary School. At the end of each school year, during the organization festival, there were championships organized connected with taking an oath by new members and scouting academy. All members of “Zaporozec” belonged to “Sokił” Sports Club. Although the sources say “Sokił” came into being in 1925, Kalisz press commented on “Sokił” matches in 1922.

Apart from football section, “Sokił” trained its members of athletics section³³, that is why Ukrainian athletes from Strzałkowo competed with Polish sports clubs in athletics, volleyball and football³⁴.

Football was the most popular discipline. “Sokił” team from Kalisz played matches against its counterpart ‘Sokół’ Gymnastics Association, Student Sports Club and “Prosna” Sports Society (all from Kalisz). In the case of the first two rivals, the victory was interchangeable³⁵ while the loss 7:0 with a “B”-class players of “Prosna” shows the differences in training³⁶. The Ukrainian players from Kalisz and Szczypiorno were also members of the camp representation team from Tuchola.

It is in Strzałkowo where there is the best-kept memory of a camp football team because football matches attracted great interest of camp and local people. It has to be stressed, however, that not only football matches were played on a playground organized on a territory of the camp, but other sports disciplines as well. The Ukrainians most often played against the team from Słupca, but they also left for matches to Toruń. In Słupca, the rivals of the camp team were the

³¹ E. Wiszka, *Prasa emigracji ukraińskiej w Polsce 1920–1939* [Ukrainian immigration press in Poland 1920–1939], Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń 2001, p. 41.

³² M. Jarecki, *Kartka z dziejówukraińskiejemigracji w Kaliszu w połowie lat trzydziestych XX* [A page of Ukrainian immigration history in Kalisz in mid thirties of XXth c.], “Gazeta Kaliska” [“Kalisz Journal”] 2004/2005, v. 30, p. 107.

³³ С. Наріжний (S. Narižnyj), *Українська еміграція...* [Ukrainian immigration..., p. 48; A. Kolańczyk, *Internowani żołnierze...* [The interned soldiers...] p. 54–55; “Goniec Kaliski” [“Kalisz Courier”] of Sept. 5, 1922, free issue, p. 2.

³⁴ Д.П. Данилович [P.D. Danyłowycz], *Класичний волейбол – чинник фізичного і національного виховання молоді у світі* [Klasycznyj wolejbol – czynnik fizycznego i nacionalnego wychowannja molodi u switi] [Classic volleyball – an element of physical and national education of young people in the world], Lviv 2013, p. 19.

³⁵ “Gazeta Kaliska” [„Kalisz Journal”] 8.10.1922, No. 229, p. 4; 17.08.1922, No. 185, p. 3; “Goniec Kaliski” [“Kalisz Courier”] 5.09.1922, No. okazowy, p. 2; 08.10.1922, nr 29, p. 2.

³⁶ “Gazeta Kaliska” [„Kalisz Journal”] 26.09.1922, nr 218, p. 3.

players of “Rozwój” Słupca Sports Club. Bogna Wojciechowska remembered the name of a Ukrainian goal-keeper – Białas³⁷. Stefan Korboński, a player of “Rozwój” remembering the camp team many years later, wrote: “They had a magnificent football team and several times we played with either good or bad luck. They were better...but we were young, energetic, enthusiastic and... better fed”³⁸. The level of training of Mikołaj Bielajew, the leader of “camp team”, enabled him to play in the colours of SKS “Rozwój” Sports Club, despite limiting the membership of the club to Polish members³⁹. On an everyday basis, the camp field was the place of training for athletes, fencers, boxers and wrestlers. Sometimes it served volleyball players, tennis players or athletes during sporting events. On July 9, 1922, YMCA organized a sporting event under the American flag. The prizes were goods of everyday use, i.e. it was a coat, underwear or tobacco in a chess tournament⁴⁰. The achieved sport level... enabled Ukrainian teams to play in regional sport unions’ tournaments. Ukrainian press, apart from national and patriotic content, also promoted physical activity among the interned people. On the pages of “Ukrainian Trumpeter” and “For Ukraine” newspaper they published information about sports clubs and Ukrainian “Sokił”⁴¹. In the subject of our interest, a special place among immigration camp press was kept by “The Sportsman” published in Strzałkowo. The newspaper, financed by YMCA, promoted the sport in Strzałkowo and other internment camps. A few articles were published in Russian. A magazine usually published news concerning various sports disciplines practised in camps (football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, boxing and chess) but also other news, like this connected with possibilities of spending holidays by the interned people in the area of Strzałkowo⁴². Based the published accounts one can conclude that in Strzałowo and other camps other sports game, such as football volleyball and basketball were very popular.

³⁷ B. Wojciechowska, *Bolszewicy pod Strzałkowem...* [*The Bolsheviks near Strzałkowo...*] p. 144.

³⁸ S. Korboński, *Polonia Restituta. Wspomnienia z dwudziestolecia niepodległości 1918–1939* [*Polonia Restituta. Memories of twenty-year-long period of independence 1918–1939*], Prohibita, Warszawa 2014, p. 94.

³⁹ AP w Koninie, Starostwo Powiatowe Słupeckie, sygn. 84, Stowarzyszenia, związki, wiecje, korespondencja, 1922 r., k. 350, Statut Słupeckiego Klubu Sportowego “Rozwój” [National Archive in Konin, Słupca County Office, sign. 84, Associations, unions, meetings, correspondence of 1922, p. 350 of “Rozwój” Słupca Sport Club Statute

⁴⁰ E. Wiszka, *Prasa emigracji ukraińskiej...* [*Ukrainian immigration press...*], pp. 41–42.

⁴¹ E. Wiszka, *Prasa obozowa żołnierzy armii Ukraińskiej Republiki Ludowej internowanych w Kaliszu i Szczypiornie w latach 1920–1924* [*Camp press of the Ukrainian People’s Republic army soldiers interned in Kalisz and Szczypiorno in the years 1920–1924*], “Rocznik Kaliski” [“Kalisz Yearbook”] 1996/1997, v. 26, p. 161, 166.

⁴² I. Срібняк [I. Sribniak], *Національно-патріотична таспортивно-оздоровча...* [*National-patriotic and health...*].

Conclusion

At the end of 1920, there came dozens of thousands of interned soldiers and civilians from Ukraine. Separated from their homeland, forced to stay in a foreign country in very difficult camp conditions they had to face the lack of food, clothes, agitation from Bolshevik authorities and what is more longing for their motherland. All this forced them to undertake activities which were to encourage their national, patriotic, health and sport aptitudes. It was schools, theatres, libraries, orchestras and camp newspapers that played the role. Different forms of encouragement mutually complemented one another. Physical activity played an important role. Apart from health-oriented influence, practising sport strengthened their fighting ability, stabilised their emotional state and integrated the community. Ukrainian people educated in (Ukrainian) camp schools and Polish schools participated in obligatory PE classes. They were initiated by the American YMCA organization and developed sport skills in many so far unknown sport disciplines (volleyball, basketball, jiu-jitsu). YMCA support enabled on-camp competition (sport festivals) and competition with Polish teams (football, volleyball, athletics). Ukrainian association "Sokił" and sports clubs of military units managed their sport activity. Football was the most popular discipline. The athletic level of Kalisz-Szczypiorno and Strzałkowo camp teams made it possible to play with footballers from other teams. Playing matches with Polish teams, however, integrated Ukrainian society and influenced positive reception by Polish society.

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