

SPORT I TURYSTYKA
ŚRODKOWOEUROPEJSKIE CZASOPISMO NAUKOWE

T. 6

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SPORT I TURYSTYKA

**ŚRODKOWOEUROPEJSKIE
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Częstochowa 2023

p-ISSN 2545-3211

e-ISSN 2657-4322

Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jana Długosza w Częstochowie
42-200 Częstochowa, al. Armii Krajowej 36a
www.ujd.edu.pl
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BIOGRAMY, DYSKUSJE, POLEMIKI, RECENZJE, PRZEGLĄD WYDAWNICTW, SPRAWOZDANIA

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Wstęp

W 2023 r. czasopismo „Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe” ukazuje się szósty rok. Jest kontynuacją czasopisma „Prace Naukowe Akademii im. Jana Długosza w Częstochowie. Kultura Fizyczna”. W czwartym numerze zostały zaprezentowane prace Autorów z różnych ośrodków naukowych w Polsce i na świecie.

W części I – *Dzieje kultury fizycznej w Polsce i na świecie* – zamieszczono cztery artykuły o następującej tematyce:

- działalność patriotyczna i religijna Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego „Sokół” na ziemiach polskich (do 1939 r.);
- wychowanie fizyczne i sport w szkolnictwie polonijnym w Niemczech w latach 1918–1939;
- sport w Kaliszu w latach 1918–1939;
- sport w literaturze – pasja sportowa w twórczości Krzysztofa Zuchory na przykładzie wybranych wierszy.

W części II, zatytułowanej *Teoria i metodyka wychowania fizycznego i sportu*, przedstawiono dwa artykuły dotyczące następującej problematyki:

- czas korzystania ze smartfonów a aktywność fizyczna na próbie uczniów czeskich i słowackich szkół średnich;
- priorytetowe kierunki badań naukowych w obszarze e-sportu: przegląd analityczny na podstawie materiałów publikacji w naukowych i metrycznych bazach danych.

W części III – *Uwarunkowania zdrowia, postawy prozdrowotne, jakość życia* – został zamieszczony artykuł analizujący wpływ treningu proprioceptywnego na stabilność posturalną nastoletnich chłopców grających w piłkę nożną (badanie wstępne).

Część IV czasopisma dotyczy problematyki turystyki i rekreacji. W tej części zaprezentowano artykuł podejmujący zagadnienie autostopu (historia, cyfryzacja i przyszłość po pandemii COVID-19).

W części *Biogramy, dyskusje, polemiki, recenzje, przegląd wydawnictw, sprawozdania* zamieszczono bibliografię publikacji w czasopiśmie naukowym „Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe” za lata 2018–2023 (2023, nr 1–3).

Pragnę złożyć serdeczne podziękowania Recenzentom za cenne i życzliwe uwagi, podnoszące wartość niniejszego periodyku. Dziękuję za współpracę Autorom publikacji zamieszczonych w czasopiśmie naukowym. Jednocześnie wyrażam nadzieję, że liczba Osób zainteresowanych publikowaniem własnych osiągnięć naukowych w kolejnych wydaniach czasopisma „Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe” poszerzy się.

Eligiusz Małolepszy

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CZĘŚĆ I

DZIEJE KULTURY FIZYCZNEJ I TURYSTYKI W POLSCE I NA ŚWIECIE



<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/sit.2023.04.01>

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Patriotic and religious activity of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” in the Polish lands (until 1939) – an outline

How to cite [jak cytować]: Urban R., *Patriotic and religious activity of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” in the Polish lands (until 1939) – an outline*, “Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe” 2023, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 11–33.

Działalność patriotyczna i religijna Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego „Sokół” na ziemiach polskich (do 1939 r.) – zarys problematyki

Streszczenie

Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne „Sokół” było pierwszą i przez kilka lat jedyną polską organizacją, która w okresie zaborów uzyskała od władz państw zaborczych zgodę na prowadzenie działalności. Pierwsze gniazdo sokole powstało we Lwowie w 1867 r., kolejne powoływano w miastach zaboru austriackiego, pruskiego, a później także rosyjskiego. Mimo że – jak sugerowała nazwa – TG „Sokół” było stowarzyszeniem gimnastycznym, w programie jego działalności znaczącą rolę odegrały również inne formy aktywności. W gniazdach utworzono koła śpiewacze, czytelnicze, opiekuńcze, a członkowie TG „Sokół” uczestniczyli w uroczystościach religijnych i patriotycznych, kultywując w ten sposób polskie tradycje narodowe. Organizowano wieczornice i spotkania, upamiętniające święta religijne oraz ważne wydarzenia z historii narodu polskiego, które przypominały o wspólnych celach i ideałach w okresie niewoli narodowej. „Sokół” przyjął na siebie obowiązek nauczania mowy ojczystej oraz dziejów ojczystych. O zakresie i charakterze działalności patriotycznej i reli-

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gijnej TG „Sokół” najlepiej świadczyły *Przykazania narodowe* oraz przeciwstawiane im *Grzechy narodowe*. Już sama ich nazwa i liczba wskazywała na głęboką religijność sokołów. Wynikała ona nie tylko z autentycznej wiary członków TG „Sokół”, ale i z ideologii tego ruchu. W tragicznych momentach dziejowych niewoli narodowej nadzieję pokładano w Bogu, a ukojenie odnajdywano w modlitwie. Wszystkie uroczystości sokole (jak również powszednia działalność TG „Sokół”) miały charakter patriotyczno-religijny.

Słowa kluczowe: Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne „Sokół”, tradycje narodowe, uroczystości religijne, rocznice patriotyczne.

Abstract

The Gymnastic Society “Sokol” (“Falcon”) (hereinafter: GS “Sokol”) was the first and for several years the only Polish organisation to obtain a permission from the authorities of the partitioning states to carry out its activities during the period of partitions. The first falcon nest was established in Lviv in 1867, with further nests being set up in the cities of the Austrian, Prussian and later Russian partitions. Although – as the name suggested – the GS “Sokol” was a gymnastic association, other forms of activity also played a significant role in its programme of activity.

Singing, reading and caring circles were formed in the nests and members of the GS “Sokol” participated in religious and patriotic ceremonies, thus cultivating Polish national traditions. Evenings and rallies were organised, commemorating religious holidays and important events in the history of the Polish nation, which reminded us of common goals and ideals during the period of national captivity. “Sokol” took on the duty of teaching native speech and native history.

The scope and nature of the patriotic and religious activity of the GS “Sokol” was best evidenced by the National Commandments and the National Sins which were contrasted with them. Their very name and number indicated deep religiousness of the falcons. It derived not only from the authentic faith of the members of the GS “Sokol” but from the ideology of the movement. In the tragic historical moments of national captivity they placed their hope in God and found solace in prayer. All Sokol celebrations as well as everyday activities of the GS “Sokol” were of a patriotic-religious nature.

Keywords: the Gymnastic Society “Sokol”, national traditions, religious celebrations, patriotic anniversaries.

Introduction

The idea of establishing a national organisation whose activity could unite the Poles and lead to regaining the country’s independence had been maturing in Polish society that was subject to partitions for many years. It was the result of political, social-economic as well as cultural-educational changes taking place in Europe in the 19th century due to the development of capitalist economy. It also went along with the trend of creating physical culture institutions, including national-gymnastic ones, which played a crucial role both in the development of democratic states and in social life of people whose countries were still partitioned. In the first case, this gymnastic movement was to support the development and political and economic stability of these states, in the latter – it func-

tioned for patriotic purposes: maintaining physical fitness of repressed citizens and preparing them for future fighting for independence.¹

The first Gymnastic Society "Sokol" was established in Czechia in 1862, thanks to the initiative of Jindřich Fügner and Miroslav Tyrš. It was the result of propagating the so-called awakening movement, which was against the Germanisation of Czech society, and its main goal was to fight for the rights of Czech inhabitants for their national life and autonomy. Due to that fact, falcon nests in Czechia focused in their activity on promoting national education and culture. Klemens Žukotyński and Ludwik Goltenthal, the representatives of Lviv academic youth, drew from such inspirations while setting up their Gymnastic Society in 1867. In 1869, it was named the Gymnastic Society "Sokol". The founding meeting was attended by several dozen enthusiasts of physical activity, who decided to exercise and practise fencing regularly, as well as to legalise the Society's activity, which they succeeded in on 25 March 1867.²

State of the art

While various aspects of sports activity undertaken by the GS "Sokol" have been well-researched by a few academics in their collective works, among others, by Kazimierz Toporowicz,³ Andrzej Bogucki,⁴ Zdzisław Pawluczuk⁵ and Eligiusz Małolepszy,⁶ Andrzej Nowakowski,⁷ Agnieszka Mirkiewicz⁸ and others,

¹ K. Toporowicz, *Zarys dziejów "Sokoła" na ziemiach polskich w latach 1867–1947*, [in:] Z. Pawluczuk (ed.), *Z dziejów Towarzystw Gimnastycznych "Sokol"*, Katedra Nauk Humanistycznych Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego w Gdańsku, Gdańsk 1996, pp. 7–8.

² J. Gaj, K. Hądzelek, *Dzieje kultury fizycznej w Polsce*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego im. Eugeniusza Piaseckiego w Poznaniu, Poznań 1997, p. 24; R. Wroczyński, *Powszechnie dzieje wychowania fizycznego i sportu*, Zakład Narodowy Imienia Ossolińskich, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków – Gdańsk 1979, pp. 209–216.

³ K. Toporowicz, *Geneza i początki sokolstwa polskiego (1867–1892)*, Akademia Wychowania Fizycznego w Poznaniu, Poznań 1990.

⁴ A. Bogucki, *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne "Sokol" na Pomorzu 1893–1939*, Centrum Informacji Naukowej Sokolstwa Polskiego przy Towarzystwie Gimnastycznym "Sokol" II w Bydgoszczy, Bydgoszcz 1997.

⁵ Z. Pawluczuk, *100 lat Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego "Sokol" w Gdańsku 1894–1994*, Akademia Wychowania Fizycznego im. Jędrzeja Śniadeckiego Wydawnictwo Uczelniane AWF w Gdańsku, Gdańsk 1998.

⁶ E. Małolepszy, Z. Pawluczuk (eds.), *Z dziejów Sokolstwa Polskiego w latach 1867–1997*, Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Częstochowie, Częstochowa 2001.

⁷ A. Nowakowski, *Wadowicki "Sokol" wczoraj i dziś – na studziesięciolecie wadowickiej sokolni 1889–1999*, Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Częstochowie, Częstochowa 1999; A. Nowakowski, *"Sokol" w Wadowicach w latach 1918–1949*, Drukarnia i Wydawnictwo Grafikon, Wadowice 2009.

⁸ A. Mirkiewicz, *Zarys dziejów sokolstwa słowiańskiego (1862–1939)*, Firma Sowa, Rzeszów 2014; A. Mirkiewicz, *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne "Sokol" w II Rzeczypospolitej*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów 2017.

not to mention many scientific articles, the patriotic and religious activity remains its slightly less-known area and this matter lacks any synthetic approach. Mirosław Ponczek⁹ wrote about the relations between the Catholic Church and the Gymnastic Society “Sokol”, but his publications did not concern the activity presented in this paper. This aspect was also tackled by Kamil Solecki, who studied such relations, yet only with regards to Rzeszów, which resulted in the publication entitled *The relations of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” in Rzeszów with the Catholic Church (1886–1914)* (*Związki Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego “Sokół” w Rzeszowie z Kościołem katolickim (1886–1914)*).¹⁰ One also should mention the aforesaid author, Agnieszka Mirkiewicz and a sub-chapter in her monograph *The Gymnastic Society “Sokol” in the Second Polish Republic (Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne “Sokół” w II Rzeczypospolitej)* entitled *The relations of „Sokol” with the Catholic Church* (*Związki “Sokoła” z Kościołem katolickim*).¹¹ On the other hand, Janusz Motyka discussed priests’ engagement in the activity of the GS “Sokol”, yet only in Przemyśl, in the chapter *The participation of the Latin Catholic clergy in the activity of the GS “Sokol” in Przemyśl in the years 1885–1939* (*Udział duchowieństwa obrządku łacińskiego w działalności PTG “Sokół” w Przemyślu w l. 1885–1939*).¹² Therefore, the author considered this matter worth studying so that she could contribute to the way this aspect of the CG “Sokol” activity is presented. There are few independent texts dealing with this matter, and they provide rather scarce information on the topic. The rich collection of images stored in the National Digital Archive in Warsaw proved to be an invaluable source for the research on this matter. Based on these photos’ captions, the author presented various aspects of the GS “Sokol” activity, focusing mainly on its patriotic and religious character.

Research methods and problems

To research and to present the aforementioned topic, the author used the methods characteristic for the methodology of historical research, mainly anal-

⁹ M. Ponczek, *Kościół katolicki prowincji krakowskiej a „Sokół” w latach II Rzeczypospolitej – zarys problematyki*, Polskie Towarzystwo Naukowe Kultury Fizycznej, Rzeszów 1996; M. Ponczek, *Kościół rzymskokatolicki a Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne “Sokół”*. *Przyczynek do historii kultury fizycznej Polski*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego w Katowicach, Katowice 1998.

¹⁰ K. Solecki, *Związki Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego „Sokół” w Rzeszowie z Kościołem katolickim (1886–1914)*, [in:] I. Pezdan-Śliż, M. Przydział (eds.), *Z tradycji kultury fizycznej w 150-lecie sportu w Polsce*, Uniwersytet Rzeszowski, Rzeszów 2018, pp. 263–278.

¹¹ A. Mirkiewicz, *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne „Sokół” w II Rzeczypospolitej...*, pp. 166–192.

¹² J. Motyka, *Udział duchowieństwa obrządku łacińskiego w działalności PTG “Sokół” w Przemyślu w l. 1885–1939*, [in:] J. Motyka, G. Klebowicz (eds.), *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne “Sokół” w Polsce południowo-wschodniej. Tradycje i współczesność*, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauki w Przemyślu, Archiwum Państwowe w Przemyślu, Przemyśl 2015, pp. 65–91.

ysis and review of available archival sources, press and journals as well as literature and unpublished works. The method of synthesis was used for formulating general and specific conclusions.

The main research issue was demonstrating in which forms of the GS "Sokol" activity its patriotic character was manifested and how religiousness of "Sokol" members influenced the Society's functioning. It was also crucial to show the difference between goals and tasks of the GS "Sokol" in the time of partitions and right after Poland became independent (after 1939).

Goals and tasks of the Gymnastic Society "Sokol"

Officially, the Society was to promote gymnastics and other sports disciplines, and its goal was the physical and spiritual development of all layers of Polish society, not limiting it to the privileged classes, including the nobility. That is why every person over 18, regardless of their social status, could become the Society's member. It was crucial "[...] not only to protect Polish culture against extinction, nationality from destruction – but to develop the guidelines for the nation – to uplift its spirit [...]. Thus, it was necessary to revive our nation by letting other social classes, apart from the nobility, participate in that oeuvre [...], to develop a link with the testament of Poland, the Constitution of 3 May."¹³

However, it was very difficult to fulfil that task as its realization could not be performed in a transparent manner. Due to Poland's partition by three foreign powers, their different policy towards the Polish nation, escalating Germanization and Russification of Polish society, and above all severe repressions imposed on Polish citizens, all activities of a patriotic character were performed with utmost care, clothed as caring about citizens' physical fitness and health by cherishing and developing physical exercising in groups, organizing group trips (showing the beauty of our native land), singing lessons (especially patriotic and religious songs). In reality, from the very beginning, falcons had had a different ultimate goal in mind – patriotic and religious education of a physically, morally and spiritually healthy young generation of Poles and preparation for future fighting for freedom and national independence. It was realized in the atmosphere of social solidarity, democracy and patriotism, and in the spirit of deep religiousness, adopting this Latin sentence as a motto: *Mens sana, in corpore sano* – A healthy mind in a healthy body,¹⁴ which obviously referred to more lofty goals than physical health only.

¹³ M. Wolańczyk, *Macierz Sokola w 60-letnim rozwoju (1867–1927)*, Polskie Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne "Sokol-Macierz", Lwów 1927, p. 8.

¹⁴ K. Toporowicz, *Zarys dziejów „Sokoła” na ziemiach polskich w latach 1867–1947...*, pp. 8–9.

The tasks undertaken by the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” are illustrated best by one of the organisation’s aphorisms that can be regarded as a certain guideline of patriotic behaviour:

- To care for one’s and others’ physical health.
- To follow the rules of pure Polish speech and writing.
- To support Polish industry and trade.
- To spread awareness among people so that they are ready to work for the nation.¹⁵

This idea was difficult to realise which can be illustrated by the fact that for several years the Society in Lviv was the only one functioning on the Polish territory although its statute made it possible to create branches. Yet, it was not easy to convince Polish society that the idea was worth trying especially that it could not be presented in a clear and legible way. After many years of humiliation and failure of national uprisings followed by severe repressions, Polish citizens almost lost all their hope for gaining independence. Thus, at first they were watching the activity of “Sokol” in Lviv with great caution. Gradually, its popularity grew, and the publication of a monthly “Gymnastic Guide “Sokol” (“Przewodnik Gimnastyczny “Sokół”), since 1881, undeniably contributed to the organizational development of the Society. It resulted in a dynamic growth in the number of new falcon nests, established mainly in the Austrian partition (e.g. 1884 – Tarnów,¹⁶ Stanisławów, 1885 – Kołomyja, Kraków, Przemyśl, Ternopil, 1886 – Bóbrka, Rzeszów, 1887 – Jasło, Nowy Sącz, Wadowice, 1888 – Stryj, 1889 – Jarosław, Sanok¹⁷), the Prussian one (e.g. 1884 – Inowrocław, 1886 – Bydgoszcz, Poznań, 1887 – Gniezno, Szamotuły, 1891 – Pleszew, 1893 – Kruszwica, Śrem, 1895 – Chełmno, Toruń, Trzemeszno¹⁸), and later on the Russian one as well. The falcon movement became also popular in the United States of North America and in a few countries of Western Europe, playing a crucial role in maintaining patriotic and religious feelings of Polish emigrants.

Patriotic and religious activity of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol”

Initially, the patriotic-religious activity of the falcon movement was very limited and it mainly focused on the educational importance of gymnastics, which,

¹⁵ *Aforyzmy Sokole*, “Sokół” Organ Związku Sokołów Polskich w Państwie Niemieckim” 1913, no 10, p. 83.

¹⁶ The activities initiating the establishment of the GS “Sokol” in Tarnów were undertaken in 1883, its statute was accepted in 1884 and in the very same year it was officially registered. Its first board was formed though only on 11 January 1885; see: M. Olejnik, *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne “Sokół” w Tarnowie i gniazda okręgu tarnowskiego do 1919 roku*, “Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego – Prace Historyczne 147” 2020, z. 1, pp. 113–114.

¹⁷ S. Zaborniak, *Na galicyjskim szlaku gniazd Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego “Sokół” (1884–1914)*, Uniwersytet Rzeszowski, Podkarpackie Towarzystwo Naukowe Kultury Fizycznej w Rzeszowie, Rzeszów 2004, pp. 15, 46–47, 67–68, 100, 125, 144, 153.

¹⁸ R. Łobożewicz, *Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne “Sokół” w Chełmnie Pomorskim w dwudziestolecu międzywojennym*, M.A. printout, Gorzów Wlkp. 1980, pp. 23–24.

if practised regularly, evoked certain courage, strong will and energy, and once its level grew – also moral motives for exercising. What is more, collectively undertaken sports challenges blurred the boundaries between students, craftsmen or workers exercising side by side and evoked heartfelt solidarity that went far beyond a gym or a playground. Soirées and events organized by falcon nests to celebrate religious holidays and commemorate important events from the history of the Polish nation, both the distant ones like the battle of Grunwald or Vienna, and more recent ones like the Kościuszko Uprising, the Constitution of May 3, the November or the January Uprising, gathered together people from different social classes, professions and political views, reminding them of their common goals and ideals at the time of national captivity. “Sokol” undertook – following the positivist trend of grassroots work – a task of teaching the mother tongue, studying the history of the nation and state, propagating national and patriotic songs, spreading information on famous and noble national heroes such as Tadeusz Kościuszko, Jan Henryk Dąbrowski, Prince Józef Poniatowski, and celebrating the anniversary of their birth or death. These events were celebrated in a very special way, in the company of distinguished representatives of the Church and falcon management. The GS “Sokol” taught to “[...] respect the past, love the present, and in this way it taught the nation with such a past that it is entitled to the future as well.”¹⁹

The aspect of referring to Poland’s glorious past was also reflected in the architecture of falcon nests. Many of them resembled old Polish fortified castles with high walls, soaring towers, slender-contoured windows. Some of them, especially the building of the GS “Sokol” in Brzozów, managed to collect a large number of national symbols. In the walls of this nest, the busts of Casimir III the Great, queen Jadwiga, Ladislaus Jagiello, Tadeusz Kościuszko were incorporated, not to mention the coats of arms of the Kingdom of Lithuania and Ruthenia, Galicia and Lodomeria. The walls of the “Sokol” seat in Sanok were decorated with an image of a falcon in a uniform, breaking the chains tying up a falcon wearing a crown, symbolising the participation of the falcons in regaining Polish independence.²⁰

The dynamic development of the falcon movement towards the end of the 19th century, especially in the Austrian and Prussian partition, made it necessary

¹⁹ *Z rozmyślań sokolich*, “«Sokół» Organ Związku Sokołów Polskich w Państwie Niemieckim” 1913, no 2, pp. 17–18; *W hołdzie księciu Józefowi*, “«Sokół» Organ Związku Sokołów Polskich w Państwie Niemieckim” 1913, no 20, pp. 185–187, 192–193; Z. Pawluczuk, *100 lat Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego “Sokół” w Gdańsku (1894–1994)*..., p. 9; B. Gruszczynska, *Działalność i rozwój Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego “Sokół” w Inowrocławiu w latach 1919–1939*, maszynopis pracy magisterskiej, Gorzów Wlkp. 1990, p. 32.

²⁰ S. Zaborniak, *Na galicyjskim szlaku gniazd Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego “Sokół” (1884–1914)*..., pp. 7–11.

to put it in some organizational frame in the form of nest clusters functioning on a given territory, which made it easier to coordinate their activities and maintain the cohesion of the whole falcon movement as far as its programme, ideals and organization were concerned. On 23 December 1892, the Association of Polish Gymnastic Falcon Societies in the Austrian Empire was formed, encompassing all falcon nests active on the Polish territory under the Austrian partition. Tadeusz Romanowicz (and after him, Ksawery Fiszer) became its chairman, and Antoni Durski was elected its head. Almost a year later, on 29 November 1893, the Association of Greater Poland Gymnastic Falcon Societies, which in 1895 was transformed into the Association of Polish Gymnastic Falcon Societies in the German State, was established. Józef Krzymiński (followed by Bernard Chrzanowski) was its chairman. The function of its head was given to Wiktor Gładysz. As late as in 1906, the Association of Polish Gymnastic Falcon Societies in the Russian partition was created, with Lucjan Kobyłecki as its chairman and Karol Noskiewicz as its head. However, merely two years later, the Russian authorities revoked their earlier permission for "Sokol's" activity and it had to operate clandestinely since then. In fear of the dispersal of activity in particular associations and in order to maintain the uniform ideal-programme approach of the falcon movement on the Polish territory, during a rally of falcon associations' delegates from the three partitions in 1907, in Cracow, an informal Consensus Committee of the Polish Falcon Associations with its office in Cracow was created. Since then, the Committee coordinated all most important activities of the Polish falcon movement. Once Poland became independent again, during the interwar period, one state Association of Gymnastic Societies "Sokol" in Poland²¹ took over the role and duties of both the Committee and particular associations coming from different partitions.

Maintaining the unity and tightening of bonds in society scattered by the partitioning states was of utmost importance for preserving the national community and bridging the gaps of divisions caused by the Polish partitions. To remedy the consequences of such a situation, numerous gatherings of association members were organized, initially at the local and regional lever and finally national ones that with time turned into huge political manifestations. The first gathering of the Polish Falcon Movement was organized in 1892, in Lviv, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of "Sokol" Macierz, but an exceptional example was the "Sokol" gathering in Grunwald in the days 14–17 July 1910, at the time of the 500th anniversary of the victorious battle of Grunwald. Falcon activists organized not only gymnastics shows, but also demonstrated the military readiness of Regular Falcon Teams, Field Teams and scout teams, which via outdoor training, shooting practice, marches and drill presented their readiness to participate

²¹ K. Toporowicz, *Zarys dziejów "Sokoła" na ziemiach polskich w latach 1867–1947...*, pp. 9–11.

in the battle for Polish independence.²² The lyrics of “Rota” written by Maria Konopnicka took on a special meaning then, becoming a kind of signal, a call to act, “[...] the deepest shock to the soul and national consciousness, [...] a call to act and liberate.”²³

The words of the appeal issued by the Department of “Sokol” Association to the participants of the gathering in Grunwald, published in “Przewodnik Gimnastyczny «Sokół»”, in January 1910, were not less meaningful: “Dear Scouts! The time of Grunwald is coming... Not an hour, not a day, not a year but a long, maybe a century-long battle... We have known it for long. No battle trumpets are blown, no kings lead, no victorious flags flap in the wind [...] More than one soul shall be defeated, more than one heart shall be broken, and those heroes shall not be victorious, crowned with wreaths, noted in history. This is a silent battle, a battle of self-sacrifice, martyrdom, a long one and – with no allies. [...] The enemy is the same, only the weapons and signs have changed! [...] And our army is different than ...in the past. Its name is: Nation.”²⁴ That Nation undertook a unique task initiated by the GS “Sokol”, i.e. building the Grunwald Mound in Niepołomice to commemorate the triumphant return of king Ladislaus Jagiello to Cracow after his victorious battle of Grunwald. The mound construction was commenced on 3 March 1910, on Sunday, after vespers, and terminated in 1915. The participation in the mound construction, with soil brought from the most remote parts of the world, was regarded at that time as a patriotic duty and became a symbol of unity for the partitioned state.²⁵

The gathering of the Polish Falcon Societies organised in Lviv, in 1913, was of an utmost importance for the awakening of patriotic feelings. It was due to three reasons: the 50th anniversary of the last Polish national liberation uprising, i.e. the January Uprising of 1863, the gathering’s location – Lviv, the cradle of Polish “Sokol”, and time – 1913, when no one doubted any more that a much-awaited moment of fighting for the country’s independence had come. “The previous gatherings were nice and beneficial national events, festive shows of well-rehearsed gymnastic evolutions, the latter one had no traits of a celebration or a show but it was in fact practical exercise of physical fitness, strength of will, fortitude, respect and discipline. The atmosphere was less festive, not so colourful and showy, but it was filled with profound thoughts that made the

²² J. Gaj, K. Hądzelek, *Dzieje kultury fizycznej w Polsce...*, pp. 27; B. Gruszczyńska, *Działalność i rozwój Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego “Sokół” w Inowrocławiu...*, pp. 41–42.

²³ E. Kubalski, *Z przeżyć i wspomnień sokolich*, Polskie Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne “Sokół” w Krakowie, Kraków 1997, p. 57.

²⁴ *Odezwą Wydziału (prezydium) Związku „Sokoła” ogłoszona w “Przewodniku Gimnastycznym” (Lwów, styczeń 1910) przed Złotem Grunwaldzkim w Krakowie w 1910 r.*, reprint in: “Przegląd Sokoli” 1999, no 3, p. 6.

²⁵ H. Setner, A. Siwek, “Sokół” w Niepołomicach 1902–1944, “Przegląd Sokoli” 1999, no 3, pp. 4–5.

ambience more serious, giving a deeper and long-lasting impression.”²⁶ The participation of falcons in WWI military operations confirmed the pertinence of the Society’s adopted approach, and falcon troops tested their combat readiness in the very first days of the war, proving their courage, sacrifice and dedication.

There are two periods that should be distinguished both in the organizational structure and the programme-ideal activity of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol”. The first one covers the Society’s activity in the time of the partitions and WWI (1867–1918), whereas the latter one covered the interwar period and the time right after the end of WWII till 1947, i.e. the time when “Sokol” was officially disbanded by the authorities of the People’s Republic of Poland. The first period was characterized by various forms of patriotic-national and religious activity such as evenings with lectures on historical events and patriotic songs singing, participation in the celebration of national events’ anniversaries and public events, e.g. funerals of distinguished Poles or religious celebrations, where falcons marked their presence with their uniforms and military formation. Gatherings also played an important role. At that time, eight general or national rallies were organised, together with several regional and local ones, not to mention several gatherings, especially in the years 1910–1914, directly concerning military preparation to WWI. The gatherings – apart from realizing a certain agenda – strengthened the solidarity of the nation divided by three partitioning states, uplifted patriotic and national sentiments and mobilized to stay active.²⁷

The range and character of patriotic and religious activity of the GS “Sokol” can be defined best by *National Commandments (Przykazania narodowe)* published by 1913, in “Sokół” journal, the organ of The Association of Polish Gymnastic Falcon Societies in the German State.²⁸ Their very name and number demonstrated falcons’ profound religiousness.

1. Love your Homeland truly, respect its past and believe in its future.
2. Honour our national poets, heroes and martyrs, commemorate them by national holidays.
3. Know the history of your country so that you can protect it effectively against strangers’ calumny.
4. Follow moral and religious education, teach your children how to pray in their mother tongue.
5. Speak Polish accurately and guard the purity of the Polish language, read good Polish books, cultivate Polish songs and customs, look for Polish games and plays for children.

²⁶ *Złot doraźny Sokolstwa polskiego we Lwowie*, “«Sokół» Organ Związku Sokołów Polskich w Państwie Niemieckim” 1913, no 15, p. 131.

²⁷ K. Toporowicz, *Zarys dziejów “Sokoła” na ziemiach polskich w latach 1867–1947...*, pp. 11–12.

²⁸ Another version of these commandments (of 1906) was given by the authors of the publication by A. Łopata (ed.), *Polskie Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne “Sokół” w Krakowie. Jubileusz 120-lecia*, Polskie Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne “Sokół” w Krakowie, Kraków 2005, p. 7; although different words were used, the sense remained the same

6. Bring your children up focusing on the development of their strong will, fortitude and fitness.
7. Support everything that is native even though it may require effort or material sacrifice.
8. Participate actively in community service and complete undertaken tasks diligently.
9. Your property and savings shall be placed in Polish enterprises only, be economical and donate readily and systematically to national causes.
10. Remember that the woman is the nation's carer, creator of Polish thought and spirit.²⁹

The commandments were juxtaposed with national sins (reference to *the Seven Deadly Sins*), according to which each falcon, Pole was guilty of sin when:

1. You introduce foreign customs and language under your roof.
2. You renounce the name of a righteous Pole and you do not always and everywhere protect Polish honour.
3. You annihilate national spirit in children by foreign upbringing.
4. You steal from your own society, not complying with the rule "Each to their own."
5. You buy in foreign shops, get medical treatment from foreign doctors, seek advice from foreign lawyers, commission work to foreign enterprises, craftsmen and workers, you employ foreign servants and you make use of foreign brokers!
6. You make loan purchases and put yourself into debt knowing you will not pay back.
7. You make yourself rich by wicked means, seek help and profit in foreign enterprises, banks and associations belonging to enemies.³⁰

Once Poland regained independence, the situation of the falcon movement changed. Some even doubted if its functioning still made sense in these new circumstances when the status of our state was not threatened any more, we could act freely, the Polish army protected our borders and the care for physical education of young people was taken over by the school educational system. The movement members proved the need of their existence in numerous publications, but above all, they proved it by their actions, participating in the Greater Poland Uprising, Silesian uprisings, fighting for Lviv and the Eastern Lesser Poland, for Vilnius, for our access to the sea, participating in Polish-Bolshevik war, taking active part in the plebiscite action in Silesia, Warmia and Masuria region, engaging in the matters concerning the incorporation of frontier areas inhabited by Polish citizens into the borders of the Polish state, e.g. in Dąbrówka Wielkopolska.³¹

There was no doubt that new reality meant the need to reorganize the Society, develop and approve its new statute, determine new directions of activity.

²⁹ *Przykazania narodowe*, "Sokół" Organ Związku Sokołów Polskich w Państwie Niemieckim" 1913, no 5, p. 42.

³⁰ *Grzech narodowy*, "«Sokół» Organ Związku Sokołów Polskich w Państwie Niemieckim" 1913, no 5, p. 42.

³¹ M. Hamerliński, *Działalność Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego "Sokół" w Dąbrówce Wielkopolskiej*, M. A. printout, Gorzów Wlkp. 1980, pp. 28, 43.

On 13 April 1919, Warsaw hosted a rally of delegates from three still functioning falcon associations. The Inter-association Branch with Bernard Chrzanowski as its leader was created. On 19 April, it was transformed into the Society Temporary Board. Finally, the three falcon associations created the Association of Gymnastic Societies "Sokol" in Poland, and on 29 November 1920, a new statute of the association was approved. "Sokol" was active on the territory of six districts in Poland: Lesser Poland, Cracow, Pomerania, Mazovia, Greater Poland, Silesia, and the seventh one encompassing Polish falcon nests in northern France, and later on in Belgium and Holland as well. "Sokol" members actively participated in the development of sports movement in Poland, enjoying a lot of success on the international arena, e.g. in gymnastics (e.g. Janina Skirlińska, Jerzy Lewicki), athletics (e.g. Stanisława Walasiewicz), archery and fencing. The programme of civic education defined its goals in the following way: "[...] the feeling of obligation towards one's country and all civic virtues constituting the foundation of love for one's Homeland, developing citizens' national and personal dignity, and the need to fulfil their social and civic duties eagerly and selflessly."³²

"Sokol" movement kept presenting its achievements during its regional and district gatherings, but above all during nationwide rallies. A rally in Poznań from 28 June to 1 July 1929 deserves our special attention as it constituted a very important element, apart from the General National Exhibition in Poznań, of celebrating the 10th anniversary of Polish independence (Photo 1). "[...] Poznań rally was to be a great peaceful manifestation of Slavism, which sees the guarantee of immunity to all temptations in working on the development of physical and moral force of future generations. It was also to demonstrate clearly that the falcon ideology was still alive and to show its achievements it wouldn't have enjoyed without it [...], it was also to be a difficult national test for the falcon movement taken on an international stage and thus being a valuable, sound argument in favour of Poland."³³ Indeed, the rally enjoyed great interest, it was attended not only by falcon representatives from all Polish districts, but also by Polish falcon movement members from western Europe and the United States. The stadium in Poznań hosted a solemn concelebrated holy mass, accompanied by flag-bearers from numerous falcon nests, attended by thousands of falcon movement delegates present at the Rally.³⁴

³² K. Toporowicz, *Zarys dziejów "Sokoła" na ziemiach polskich w latach 1867–1947...*, pp. 14–15.

³³ M. Sławiński, *Zasługi osobiste, jako czynnik powodzenia Złotu Poznańskiego*, "Stanica". A one-off issue devoted to the chairman of the Association of Polish Falcon Movement, scout Adam Zamoyski on his nameday", Katowice 1929, p. 39.

³⁴ National Digital Archive (henceforth: NAC), Zespół: Koncern Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny – Archive of Images (henceforth: IKC–AI), the Gymnastic Society "Sokol" – All-Slavic rally in Poznań, sygn. 3/1/0/5/440/2.

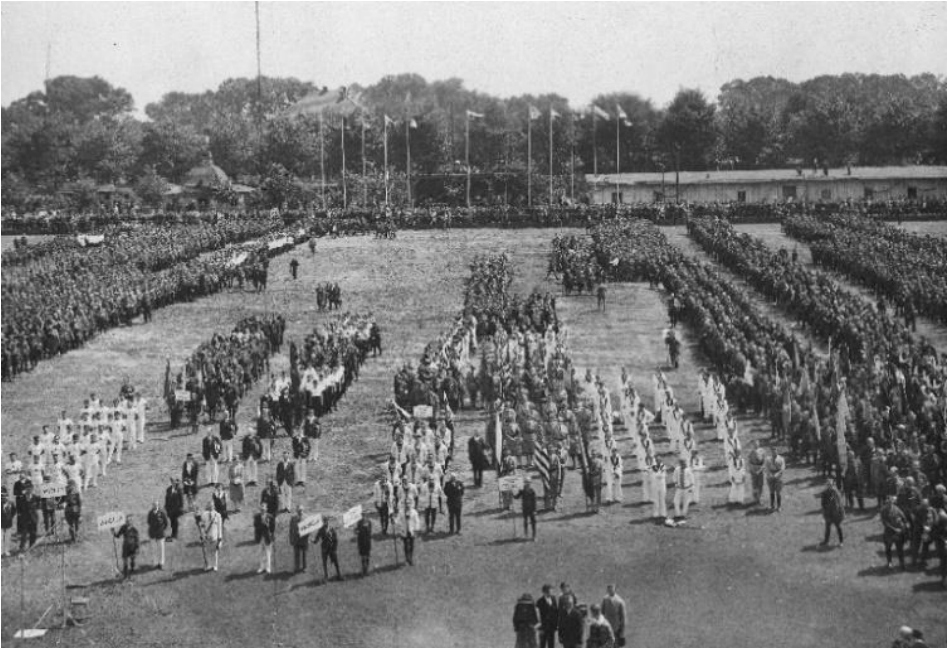


Photo 1. All-Slavic Rally of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” celebrating the 10th anniversary of independence, Poznań, June 1929

Source: NAC, sygn. 3/1/0/5/440/3.

All the rallies devoted to consecrating “Sokol” banners in parish churches, e.g. in Kałusz³⁵ or those celebrating anniversaries of particular nests were also outstanding. A rally celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Gymnastic Society in Cracow took place from 27 to 30 June 1935, a bit more than a month after the death of Polish Marshal Józef Piłsudski. His remnants were buried in St. Leonard’s crypt at Wawel castle. The funeral was attended by “Sokol” troops from many nests.³⁶

To commemorate the Marshal, falcon movement members undertook an initiative to erect a mound on top of Sowiniec and give it His name. The mound consisted of soil from all the battlefields of WWI, where Polish soldiers fought, including the summit of Krzemieniucha (Photo2). “Sokol” members from Zakopane brought a boulder from Mała Łąka in the Tatra Mountains, which was transported to the mound.³⁷ To show how greatly the initiative and “Sokol|”

³⁵ NAC, IKC–AI, Regional Rally of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” in Kałusz, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1074.

³⁶ E. Kubalski, *Z przeżyć i wspomnień sokolich...*, p. 107; NAC, IKC–AI, Commemorating Polish Marshal Józef Piłsudski in Cracow, sygn. 3/1/0/2/299.

³⁷ NAC, IKC–AI, Rally of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” celebrating the 50th anniversary of Cracow Society, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1031.

achievements were appreciated, the members were addressed by, among all, mayor of Cracow, Rudolf Radzyński. The anniversary celebration was a great religious event. It took place in the Wawel castle cathedral. "Sokol" members arrived in procession, with their banners, walking through the streets of the city. The Chairman of the Cracow District of the Polish Association of Gymnastic Societies "Sokol", Stanisław Rowiński, unveiled a commemorative plaque devoted to falcon movement members – legionnaires who sacrificed their lives fighting for Poland's independence. The plaque was set in the wall of the building which served as the office of Cracow Society.³⁸



Photo 2. "Sokol" members at work during the construction of Józef Piłsudski mound, Cracow, 27–30 June 1935

Source: NAC, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1031/3.

The Eighth National Rally of The Gymnastic Society "Sokol", organised from 26 to 29 June 1937, in Katowice was also symbolic in its character. The rally was held under the auspices of Polish cardinal August Hlond and Polish marshal, brigadier general Edward Śmigły-Rydz. The rally was organized to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the falcon movement in Poland and the 15th anniversary of Silesia's return to the Motherland. Taking into account a long and difficult way of Silesian insurgents who sacrificed a lot to bring their region back to Poland, and

³⁸ NAC, IKC-AI, Rally of the Gymnastic Society "Sokol" celebrating the 50th anniversary of Cracow Society, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1031/33, 89, 98, 116, 129.

growing new conflicts, the Rally became a huge falcon and national manifestation. A ceremonial field mass was concelebrated by Silesian bishop Stanisław Adamski, with the participation of the Speaker of the Silesian Parliament Karol Grzesik, Silesian voivode Michał Grażyński, major-general Leon Berbecki, the chairman of the Association of the Polish Falcon Movement, lieutenant Franciszek Arciszewski. The Rally was one of the last events of this type before the outbreak of WWII.³⁹



Photo 3. Members of GS “Sokol” after laying the wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw; in the centre – chairman of the GS „Sokol” count Adam Zamoyski

Source: NAC, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1029/1.

Defenders of the homeland – known and unknown – remained in falcons’ memory forever. During national celebrations, anniversaries of particular nests or those commemorating tragic battles of Polish soldiers, “Sokol” delegates always laid wreaths on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw (Photo 3),⁴⁰ Grudziądz (Photo 4),⁴¹ or Żółkiew, whose inhabitants founded a plaque with the

³⁹ E. Kubalski, *Z przeżyć i wspomnień sokolich...*, p. 114; NAC, IKC–AI, The Eighth National Rally of The Gymnastic Society “Sokol” in Katowice organised to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the falcon movement in Poland and the 15th anniversary of Silesia’s return to the Motherland, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1032/7, 8.

⁴⁰ NAC, IKC–AI, The rally’s delegation after laying the wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1029.

⁴¹ NAC, IKC–AI, The event participants laying the wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1072.

following inscription: “Our tribute to the Unknown Soldier fighting for his Homeland and this town, on 12.01.1919, the town of Żółkiew.” The plaque is located in front of the office of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” in that town.⁴² Silesian falcon movement members commemorated the sacrifice and tragic death of the insurgents, paying tribute to them in front of the Tomb of the Unknown Insurgent at Wolności Square in Katowice.⁴³ Similarly, the members of the Polish Gymnastic Society “Sokol” from the United States and Yugoslavia⁴⁴ paid tribute to their dead brothers in arms during their visits in Poland, e.g. in 1932 and 1935.⁴⁵



Photo 4. Participants of the event celebrating the 40th anniversary of the GS “Sokol” in Pomerania laying their wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Grudziądz, 11 June 1934.

Source: NAC, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1072/2.

Falcon movement members followed their traditions deriving from the partition times to honour national heroes and all the figures permanently inscribed

⁴² NAC, IKC–AI, The event of consecrating the plaque commemorating the Unknown Soldier located in front of the office of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” in Żółkiew, sygn. 3/1/0/9/8303.

⁴³ NAC, IKC–AI, Delegates of the GS “Sokol” laying the wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Insurgent in Katowice, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1081/2; 3/1/0/6/1083/2, 3, 4, 5.

⁴⁴ NAC, IKC–AI, The Gymnastic Society “Sokol” from Yugoslavia in Poland, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1044/1, 2.

⁴⁵ NAC, IKC–AI, Delegates of the Society from Detroit laying the wreath of on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1054/1; Female delegates of the Society “Sokol” from the United States of America laying the wreath of on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1055/1.

in the history of Poland and Polish nation. In 1931, during the celebrations devoted to the 40th anniversary of the Gymnastic Society in Cieszyn, a monument of Mieszko I, the first ruler of Poland, was unveiled.⁴⁶ The Society members cultivated the memory of our national poet Adam Mickiewicz, whose works had played a crucial role in strengthening our patriotic feelings during the time of national slavery (Photo 5). The monument of the poet in Cracow bears the following inscription: “To Adam Mickiewicz – the People,” which demonstrates high esteem for the poet.⁴⁷ The event of putting the wreath at the monument of Tadeusz Kościuszko at the main market square in Rzeszów became a patriotic demonstration. It took place during the rally of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” members in this town.⁴⁸ Tadeusz Kościuszko was a distinguished figure for falcon movement members. They chose him to be their patron and spiritual leader, regarding him as the first man who not only fought for Polish independence but also implemented the rules of the Constitution of 3 May 1791.⁴⁹



Photo 5. Delegates of the GS “Sokol” after laying the wreath at the monument of A. Mickiewicz, Cracow 1929 r.

Source: NAC, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1038/1.

⁴⁶ NAC, IKC–AI, The 40th anniversary of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” in Cieszyn, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1065/1, 21.

⁴⁷ NAC, IKC–AI, Delegation members laying the wreath at the monument of A. Mickiewicz, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1038/1.

⁴⁸ NAC, IKC–AI, The rally of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” members in Rzeszów, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1136/1.

⁴⁹ M. Wolańczyk, *Macierz Sokola w 60-letnim rozwoju...*, p. 9.

Adopting the Constitution of 3 May 1791 became a national holiday already on May 5 1791. Each anniversary of this event was celebrated with great solemnity, even when the partitioning states forbade to celebrate it officially. For falcon movement members this day became special – at the time of the partitions it motivated them to act and it constituted an occasion to organize solemn religious-patriotic evenings. Once Poland regained independence and the Legislative Assembly of 1919 proclaimed that day a national holiday, falcon movement members used that opportunity to demonstrate their constant readiness to defend our Homeland during parades, processions and celebrations. It is worth mentioning that the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” members from Beaulieu⁵⁰ in France also celebrated anniversaries of the Constitution of 3 May.

It should be underlined that the whole falcon movement was deeply religious in its character not only due to genuine faith of its members but because of the movement’s ideology. In tragic moments in the history of national slavery, in God they trusted, they sought help in Him, they found solace in prayer. All falcon celebrations were of a religious character, there were masses with the participation of the most distinguished Church representatives, priests took part in rallies, anniversaries, consecrated new falcon nests, water marines, boats (Photo 6).⁵¹ The falcon movement members actively engaged in Church life, e.g. in 1934, the premises of “Sokol” in Cracow hosted the event celebrating the 25th priesthood anniversary of Bogdan Niemczyński, attended by the wife of the mayor of Cracow Mieczysław Kaplicki, countess Róża Łubieńska, senator Edward Raczyński, MP Marian Dąbrowski.⁵²

Bringing the relics of St Andrew Bobola to Poland in June 1938 was a religious event of special significance. Andrew Bobola, Jesuit priest, missionary, preacher was the author of Lviv vows of John II Casimir Vasa and contributed to recognizing Our Lady as the Queen of Poland, which was confirmed by John II Casimir Vasa in Lviv on 1 April 1656. Priest Bobola died a martyr death murdered by Cossacks during the Khmelnytsky uprising in 1657. In 1853, he was beatified, and in 1938 canonised by the Pope Pius XI. Having brought his remnants from Rome to Poznań, the representatives of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol” participated in the procession during which the coffin was transported from St. John’s Cathedral to the Jesuit chapel, which was followed by the guard of honour at the Saint’s coffin (Photo 7.).⁵³

⁵⁰ NAC, IKC–AI, 3 May celebrations in Cracow; sygn. 3/1/0/6/2898/12; 3 May celebrations in Beaulieu, sygn.3/1/0/16/652/7.

⁵¹ NAC, IKC–AI, The consecration of the boat belonging to the Rowing Branch of the GS “Sokol” in Cracow, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1100.

⁵² NAC, IKC–AI, The 25th priesthood anniversary of Bogdan Niemczyński, sygn. 3/1/0/15/227.

⁵³ NAC, IKC–AI, Bringing the relics of St. Andrew Bobola to Poland, sygn. 3/1/0/15/431.



Photo 6. The consecration of the boat belonging to the Rowing Branch of the GS "Sokol" in Cracow, Cracow 24 May 1930

Source: NAC, sygn. 3/1/0/6/1100/1.



Photo 7. The guard of honour formed by the representatives of the GS "Sokol" at the coffin with the relics of St Andrew Bobola, the Jesuit church in Poznań, June 1938

Source: NAC, sygn. 3/1/0/15/431/5.

Conclusion

The outbreak of WWII put an end to the organizational-programme activity of the Gymnastic Society "Sokol". However, it did not make falcon movement members idle. A definite majority of "Sokol" movement members took part in the defensive struggle of Poland in September 1939. After the Polish army surrender, they engaged in conspirational activities, both in the country and abroad, in order to join the military struggle in the ranks of ally armies in the West and during the Warsaw Uprising. Due to their membership and previous activity, the members of the Gymnastic Society "Sokol" and their families were identified, persecuted, imprisoned in concentration camps, and often shot in massive street executions. Many of them died in the Nazi concentration camps and Soviet forced-labour camps.⁵⁴ Despite the fact that over 70 years have already passed since the end of WWII, their patriotic activity and martyrdom during that time still remains poorly researched and is waiting for scientific studies that it certainly deserves.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The author declared no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Patriotic and religious activity of the Gymnastic Society "Sokol" in the Polish lands (until 1939) – an outline*.

FUNDING

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Patriotic and religious activity of the Gymnastic Society "Sokol" in the Polish lands (until 1939) – an outline*.

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⁵⁴ M. Gizowski, *Sokolstwo polskie w czasie II wojny światowej (1939–1945)*, [in:] E. Małolepszy, Z. Pawluczuk (eds.), *Zarys dziejów Sokolstwa Polskiego w latach 1867–1997...*, pp. 194–199; Z. Pawluczuk, *100 lat Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego "Sokol" w Gdańsku (1894–1994)...*, pp. 28–29; K. Toporowicz, *Zarys dziejów "Sokoła" na ziemiach polskich w latach 1867–1947...*, p. 16.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/sit.2023.04.02>

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Physical education and sports in Polish education in Germany in the years 1918–1939

How to cite [jak cytować]: Jurek T., Połaniecka A., *Physical education and sports in Polish education in Germany in the years 1918–1939*, "Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe" 2023, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 35–51.

Wychowanie fizyczne i sport w szkolnictwie polonijnym w Niemczech w latach 1918–1939

Streszczenie

W latach 1918–1939 w Niemczech mieszkało około 1,5 mln ludności polskiej. Najwięcej Polaków żyło na Śląsku, w Prusach Wschodnich, w centralnej części tego kraju, w Nadrenii-Westfalii oraz na pograniczu wschodnim. Formami działalności patriotycznej – mającymi na celu m.in. uniknięcie asymilacji – były wychowanie fizyczne, sport, turystyka i rekreacja oraz ruch gimnastyczny w ramach Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego „Sokół”. Ważną rolę w tej działalności narodowej odgrywało polskie szkolnictwo w Niemczech. Sprawami szkolnictwa zajmował się powstały w 1922 roku Związek Polskich Towarzystw Szkolnych. Wśród wielu przedmiotów dużą popularnością cieszyły się lekcje wychowania fizycznego i pozalekcyjne zajęcia sportowe. W latach 1918–1939 trwała walka o rozwój polskiego szkolnictwa w Niemczech. W ramach zajęć szkolnych odbywały się lekcje wychowania fizycznego oraz pozalekcyjne zajęcia sportowo-turystyczne. Polsko-niemiecka rywa-

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lizacja o polską szkołę dotyczyła zwłaszcza terenów pogranicza, gdzie działalność sportowa była bardzo aktywna. Wychowanie fizyczne i sport szkolny spełniały rolę utylitarną, prewencyjną oraz patriotyczną. Należy podkreślić, że wszyscy uczniowie polskich szkół w Niemczech byli objęci w ramach programu obowiązkowymi lekcjami wychowania fizycznego.

Słowa kluczowe: polonijna kultura fizyczna, wychowanie fizyczne, sport szkolny, mniejszość polska w Niemczech.

Abstract

Between 1918 and 1939, Germany had a Polish population of about 1.5 million. Most Poles lived in Silesia, East Prussia, the central part of the country, Rhine-Westphalia and the eastern borderlands. One of the forms of patriotic activity to avoid assimilation was physical education, sports, tourism and recreation, the gymnastic movement within the framework of the Gymnastic Society "Sokol". An important role in this national activity was played by Polish education in Germany. Educational affairs were handled by the Union of Polish School Societies, established in 1922. Among many subjects, physical education classes and extracurricular sports activities were very popular. In the years 1918–1939, a real battle for Polish school in Germany with physical education classes and after school activities took place. This struggle affected mainly the Polish-German borderland and in this particular area the sport activities were also the most visible ones. Physical education had a utilitarian and a preventative role, but the Polish activists also laid an emphasis on the high standards of the physical education classes and after school activities that were very often educational and patriotic. All primary school students took part in obligatory physical education classes and additional after school activities. It should be noted that all students of Polish schools in Germany attended compulsory physical education lessons.

Keywords: Polish physical culture, physical education, school sports, Polish minority in Germany.

Introduction

The 19th century witnessed a political and economic exodus of Polish citizens from the three partitions to several countries of Western Europe and the United States.¹ The biggest number of Poles chose Germany on the European continent due to its proximity and favourable economic conditions. These favourable conditions for industry in the dynamically developing Second Reich after its victorious war with France and the country's unification definitely contributed to it. As a result, only in the years 1890–1910, the number of Polish citizens seeking "bet-

¹ According to the estimates, in the years 1871–1914, about 3.5 mln people (13.7 percent of Polish citizens living on the territory of three partitions) left the Polish territory, whereas in the years 1918–1939, the border of the Second Polish Republic was crossed by 2.5 mln people, mainly for financial purposes. The biggest number of Poles left for the United States of America and Germany. In the 30s of the 20th century, there were 7.5 mln Poles living abroad. The majority of them lived in the USA – 3.6 mln, followed by immigrants in Germany – 1.5 mln, the USSR – 0.9 mln, France – 0.6 mln, Brazil – 0.2 mln, Czechoslovakia – 0.2 mln and Lithuania – 0.2 mln. E. Kołodziej, *Emigracja z ziem polskich i Polonia 1865–1939*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa – Kraków 1988, pp. 5–6.

ter future” grew fourfold in Germany and before the outbreak of WWI it reached 1.5 mln people. Till the end of the interwar period, the number of Polish citizens living in Germany remained at a similar level. According to Polish estimates, during the interwar period, the biggest number of Poles lived in Upper Silesia (600–800,000), East Prussia (350–500,000), the central part of the country (120–150,000), Western Germany (95–120,000) and Lower Silesia (60,000).²

The Polish minority in the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich faced numerous difficulties concerning the discriminating Policy of German authorities and active attempts of denationalization. It was exercised in the economic, political, cultural and educational area, even the propaganda-statistical one. This policy reached its peak during the Third Reich period. To defend their rights, in 1922, the Poles established the Union of Poles in Germany – the main organization of the Polish minority within the borders of this country, whose motto was “A Pole serves his nation every day.” There were also several other organisations gathering Poles together, which demonstrated exuberant development of national life. They cultivated the traditions of “the old homeland” concerning the promotion of culture, especially the Polish language and customs. Their economic, political, religious, educational and sports activity was not without significance.³

Educational matters were attributed a very important role, especially as far as the development of minority education was concerned. Poles as the national minority were entitled to it within the German borders. Among the subjects taught physical education and extracurricular activities comprising sport, tourism and recreation had a crucial role. So far, historiography has rarely tackled the topic of the development of physical education and sport taught at school and it has not been thoroughly researched. While other areas of Polish national life in Germany have been described in numerous publications, the topic of physical culture was dealt with only at the regional level⁴ and as far as the activ-

² At that time, Poles constituted the biggest national minority in Germany. W. Wrzesiński, *Polski ruch narodowy w Niemczech w latach 1922–1939*, Ossolineum, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1993, pp. 27–29.

³ The most important monographs included the following publications: H. Chałupczak, *II Rzeczpospolita a mniejszość polska w Niemczech*, Poznań 1992; T. Klimaszewski, *Emigracja polska w Niemczech*, Białystok 2007; M. Lis, *Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego w Niemczech (1922–1939)*, Opole 1981; J. Marczewski [ed.], *Związek Polaków w Niemczech w latach 1922–1982*, Warszawa 1987; T. Musioł, *Polacy w Niemczech w latach 1918–1939*, Wydawnictwa Instytutu Śląskiego w Opolu, Opole 1963; M. Orzechowski, *Ludność polska w Niemczech w latach 1922–1939*, Warszawa 1967; A. Poniatowska, *Polacy w Berlinie w latach 1918–1945*, Poznań 1986.

⁴ B. Grańska, T. Jurek, *Polonijna kultura fizyczna w Nadrenii-Westfalii w latach 1899–1939*, Akademia Wychowania Fizycznego im. Eugeniusza Piaseckiego, Monografie nr 444, Poznań 2015; A. Segner, *Polski ruch sportowy na Śląsku Opolskim w latach 1922–1939*, Rozprawy Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Wychowania Fizycznego, Wrocław 1966, pp. 21–81.

ity of the Gymnastic Society “Sokol”⁵ was concerned. Bernard Woltmann and Tomasz Jurek were the only authors focusing on the matters of physical education and sport taught at school. The monograph entitled *Polish Physical Culture in Germany (1918–1939)* [*Polonijna kultura fizyczna w Niemczech (1918–1939)*], presenting many aspect of Polish physical culture within the German borders till 1939, should be considered the most important work. Due to the nature of this ample publication,⁶ it only offers a fairly general outline of the matters of physical education and sport taught at school.

Research methods and problems

The publication uses archival sources stored in the Federal Archives in Berlin, the New Archives Department in Warsaw, and the State Archives in Katowice, Piła and Poznań. Thematic studies, mainly memoirs proved very useful as well. The research material was studied with the help of the methods of analysis and synthesis of historical sources, induction and deduction, and the comparative method. The author formulated the following research problems:

1. Which role was played by Polish education in Germany in the national activity of Poles in that country?
2. What were the forms of obligatory and facultative lessons of physical education in Polish schools?
3. In which Polish circles in Germany were physical education and sport taught at school the most important?

⁵ D. Blecking, *Die Geschichte der nationalpolnischen Turnorganisation “Sokol” im Deutschen Reich 1884–1939*, Lit-Verlag, Münster – Dortmund 1987.

⁶ T. Jurek, *Polonijna kultura fizyczna w Niemczech (1918–1939)*, Polskie Towarzystwo Naukowe Kultury Fizycznej Sekcja Historii, Warszawa 2013. The matters of physical education and sport taught at school were also briefly discussed by other authors in their publications concerning Polish educational matters in Germany. These were the following publications: B. Woltmann, *Z dziejów wychowania fizycznego i sportu wśród Polaków na ziemi złotowskiej w latach 1919–1939*, “Rocznik Nadnotecki”, no 3, Poznań 1970, pp. 279–291; ibidem, *Kultura fizyczna pod znakiem Rodła. Wychowanie fizyczne, sport i turystyka polskiej ludności rodzimej na ziemi złotowskiej w latach 1919–1939*, Koszalin 1972; ibidem, *Polska kultura fizyczna na wschodnim pograniczu niemieckim (1919–1939)*, Monografie AWF, no 125, Poznań 1980; T. Musioł, *Szkolnictwo polskie w reencji opolskiej 1919–1939*, Wydawnictwa Instytutu Śląskiego w Opolu, Opole 1964; B. Jęchorek, *Wśród polskich dzieci w Zakrzewie i Krajence*, [in:] E. Makowski (study), *Pamiętniki nauczycieli złotowskich 1929–1939*, Poznań 1964; W. Gębik, *Burzom dziejów nie dali się zgnieść*, Wydawnictwo Morskie, Gdynia 1967; J. Lubos, *Dzieje Polskiego Gimnazjum w Bytomiu w świetle dokumentów i wspomnień*, Wydawnictwo Śląsk, Katowice 1971; H. Lehr, E. Osmańczyk, *Polacy spod znaku Rodła*, Wydawnictwo Żywe Kamienie, Warszawa 1972.

Results and discussion

National activity of Poles in Germany encompassed care for children and teenagers, who were especially susceptible to the influence of galloping Germanisation. The leaders of the Polish minority in Germany were aware of the fact that Polish circles deprived of any educational system were particularly vulnerable to the assimilation of their youngest members, deprived of access to the Polish language and the country's culture and history. As a result, in such places the disappearance of Polish national identity and cultural traditions progressed very fast, which was noticed and – according to the Polish minority leaders – everything was done to restrict this exceptionally dangerous process. Thus, at the time of the 20th century interwar period, the Polish circles in Germany were fighting for Polish school in order to counter the process of Germanisation of Polish children and youth.

Both the Union of Poles in Germany and the Union of Polish School Societies, established on 27 August 1922, tightly linked with the first organisation, played a crucial role in the process of creating Polish education in the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich. Thanks to the active and uncompromising stance of the aforementioned organisations' members in executing the educational rights, Polish state schools were established in the German part of the Upper Silesia, and a net of private schools was opened on the territory of Eastern Prussia. It derived from the fact that the border territories had a priority status for the Union of Poles in Germany as there was a concern that as a result of intensified Germanisation, the assimilation of Polish citizens on the originally Polish territories might proceed very fast. For generations, these were the territories inhabited by Poles, which, due to unfavourable results of the plebiscites organized in Silesia, Eastern Prussia and Powiśle district, were incorporated within the German borders.⁷

The educational matters were regulated by the so-called Little Geneva Convention concerning the Upper Silesia, which allowed for the establishment of Polish schools in the German part of this region. Initially, the impact was hard to notice. Thanks to this convention, in the years 1923-1926, 6 primary schools were established and they were attended by 2 229 pupils (2.6% of all school-age children). Despite the hope that the number of schools was going to grow every year, there was an opposite tendency and Polish educational institutions decreased in number. In the years to follow, the number of school got smaller and as a result in 1925 there were 53 of them (1269 pupils), in 1926 – 37 schools (951 children), in 1928 – 31 schools (507 children), in 1932 – 23 schools (254 children), and in 1936 – 6 schools (78 children). Such mediocre effects let us state that the process of creating Polish schools in German Silesia failed despite

⁷ T. Jurek, *Polonijna kultura fizyczna...*, p. 83.

quite promising initial outcomes of creating new establishments in the years 1923–1925. As a result, once the Upper Silesia Convention in ceased to be valid in Upper Silesia, only a small number of Polish pupils could attend Polish schools.⁸

The next group of Polish primary schools were private establishments created pursuant to the so-called school ordinance issued in December 1928. It allowed to establish private schools after fulfilling certain conditions, which the Poles did so that they could create new schools. This phenomenon concerned mainly the borderlands inhabited by indigenous people along the whole former eastern border which mainly covered the area of the Frontier March of Posen-West Prussia (Grenzmark Posen – Westpreussen).⁹ Altogether, 72 Polish primary schools were open, the majority of them (70 establishments) at the time of the Weimar Republic, and only two of them at the time of the Third Reich. The biggest number of private schools were located on the following territories of the Frontier March of Posen-West Prussia: district of Złotów – 23, Warmia – 15, Opole Silesia – 13, Powiśle – 10, Babimost – 5, Kashubia – 4, Międzyrzecze – 1, Mazuria – 1. The total of 1955 pupils were registered in private schools, which constituted merely 2% of all Polish children subject to obligatory education. In particular borderland areas, the number of Polish private schools was as follows: the Frontier March of Posen-West Prussia – 1325, Eastern Prussia – 414, Opole Silesia – 143, Kashubia – 73. Similarly to Silesia, the number of Polish schools in the borderland areas was gradually decreasing, especially in the second half of the 1930s, at the time of Nazi anti-Polish chauvinism and totalitarian propaganda, reaching the number of 55 schools in the school year 1938-1939, attended by 1297 pupils, i.e. one third less than at the initial period of these establishments' operating.¹⁰

⁸ In 1936, only 11% of all previously established schools were created and they were attended by only 6% of pupils in comparison to the most numerous year 1925 in this respect. There were numerous reasons, mainly financial difficulties that Polish families suffered from, and the pressure exercised on Poles not to send their children to Polish schools. The Germans explained that fact with satisfaction by talking about "lack of Polish children", which was not true. T. Musioł: *Działalność oświatowa Polaków w Niemczech 1919–1939*, [in:] *Polacy w Republice Weimarskiej i w III Rzeszy*, Olsztyn 1965, pp. 93–94; W. Wrześniński, *Polski ruch narodowy w Niemczech w latach 1922–1939*, Ossolineum, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1993, pp. 145–146.

⁹ The Frontier March of Posen-West Prussia was established in 1920 and encompassed the borderland territories from Mazuria, along the whole border up to Opole Silesia with its capital in Piła. Its establishment was of a uniquely political nature, directed against the Polish community, to support the assimilation of Poles on the borderland territory.

¹⁰ However, this process was much slower than in Silesia as in 1939 there were 55 schools left, which constituted 76% of the schools originally created, attended by 66% of the maximum number of private schools' pupils. BA Berlin, Deutsche Stiftung, no 992, pp. 306–309; no 1000, pp. 418–429; AP Piła, Rejencja Pogranicza, no 3424, pp. 245–248; no 3926, pp. 142–144; no 3929, pp. 33–35; J. Baczewski, *Wspomnienia Warmiańska*, Czytelnik, Warszawa 1961, pp. 101, 214–233, 301–306; T. Musioł: *Działalność oświatowa...*, p. 95.

In the years 1923–1929, the determination of the Union of Poles in Germany and the Union of Polish School Societies, not to mention parents alone, led to the establishment of 128 primary schools in Germany. They were also called folk schools (Volksschulen), with Polish being their language of instruction. However, only half of them (61 establishments) survived till the end of the interwar period, at the end of which they were attended by 1375 pupils. According to the classification of educational institutions, the establishments concerned should be categorized in the group of elementary schools (Grundschulen), having one joined class taken care by only one teacher. It should be emphasized that in primary schools the German curriculum was obligatory yet the Polish language, History and Geography were added. These subjects had a priority status as they constituted the most important tool used to promote Polish identity among pupils.¹¹

During the aforementioned period, the Polish schools in the Weimar Republic and in the Third Reich had to realise the German curriculum, which, according to the German school tradition, put a lot of emphasis on physical education. It derived from rich military Prussian traditions in this field (first a student – then a recruit), the national physical exercise system within the framework of German gymnastics system developed by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn as well as from the cult of physical fitness in the Third Reich society. The traditional teaching methods called Lernschule were gradually replaced with upbringing methods resorting to physical exercise (Bildungsschule), pursuant to the Nazi concepts of raising the nation of masters (rulers). It offered a significant opportunity of physical education and sport teaching for two lessons per week in lower grades and three lessons per week in upper grades.¹²

An analysis of the way the programme of physical education classes was really executed renders interesting observations. Despite priority given to physical education in German school curricula, organizing the subject in question in Polish schools faced certain obstacles and was dependent first of all on teachers' qualifications and a financial situation of a particular school as far as its sports facilities and equipment were concerned. Polish schools especially lacked gyms and they suffered from the shortage of specialist equipment, which significantly restricted the possibility of full realization of the physical education programme. The physical education programme encompassed three sections: general development exercises (Körperschule), movement games (Spiele) and sports (Leistungsturnen, Wettspiele). The first one focused on drill and shaping exercises, the second one covered games, plays and team sports, whereas the third one included the most popular individual sports disciplines in Germany: gymnastics, athletics and swim-

¹¹ AP Poznań, Polski Związek Zachodni, nr 206, Polnische Minderheitsschulen in Preussen. Verordnung der Preussischen Staatsregierung zur Regelung des polnischen Minderheitsschulwesens; B. Woltmann: *Wychowanie fizyczne młodzieży polskiej...*, p. 344.

¹² For more information see: T. Musioł, *Szkolnictwo polskie w reencji opolskiej (1919–1939)*, Wydawnictwa Instytutu Śląskiego w Opolu, Opole 1964, p. 53.

ming.¹³ The very same programme was obligatory in Polish primary schools, similarly to schools run by other national minorities. As B. Woltmann states, the progress of the lesson should involve the following activities and exercises: I – greeting, drill and shaping exercises, II – hanging, exercises with the body supported on the hands, balancing, free and mixed jumping, movement games, III – correction exercises, calming exercises, saying goodbye. The surviving lesson documentation shows that gymnastic exercises and athletics dominated physical education classes. There was an acute lack of gymnastics equipment so out of necessity free exercises (their elements), shaping, stretching and drill dominated, where teachers could make use of small playgrounds and areas on school premises for that purpose. As far as games, plays, exercises and field games were concerned, there were more options to carry them out not only on school playgrounds but in the form of trips in the school surrounding area. More and more popular elements of the scouting method based on fieldwork began to reach schools. Steeplechase was becoming more and more popular. As archival relations and memoirs of pupils and teachers show, children were very eager to take part in engaging lessons implementing games and plays as well as field exercises and games.¹⁴

Table 1. A weekly number of hours devoted to particular subjects in the grades I – VIII of Polish school in Germany

Subject	I	II	III-IV	V-VI	VII-VIII
Religion	4	4	4	4	4
Writing	1	2	—	—	—
The Polish language	5.5	6.5	4	4	4
Calculations (mathematics)	4	4	5	5	5
Art	2	1	2	2	2
Singing	1.5	1.5	2	2	2
Practical activities	2	1	2	2	2
Physical education	2	2	2	2	2
The Latin language	—	—	5	5	5
Knowledge about the region	—	—	2	—	—
History	—	—	—	2	2
Nature	—	—	—	2	2
Geography	—	—	—	—	2
Total	22	22	28	30	32

Source: T. Musioł, *Szkolnictwo polskie w rejencji opolskiej (1919–1939)*, Wydawnictwa Instytutu Śląskiego w Opolu, Opole 1964, p. 53.

¹³ AP Piła, Rejencja Pogranicza, no 3934, pp. 240–241.

¹⁴ B. Woltmann, *Wychowanie fizyczne młodzieży polskiej...*, p. 345.

The teachers who significantly contributed to the development of physical education and sport in particular schools were those who were not always specialists in that discipline but nevertheless they ran not only school classes but also promoted sport among the youth in a given environment.¹⁵ Bolesław Jęchorek – a teacher in Polish schools in Krajenka, Nowy Kramsk and Zakrzew – stated that after regular lessons he often played an animator role of young people's sports-cultural life. He wrote as follows:

In my after-school time I took care of sports club "Jedność" already known to me from Obrzycko from 1929, and I also worked in a library. The members of the sports club met twice a week to practise gymnastics in the room of the restaurant managed by Władysław Dobberstein. [...] Young people in great numbers willingly took part in such exercise and oftentimes the room was too small to accommodate all of them and put them in an exercise line. Among exercises practised for sports days, there were a few that stood out: rhythmic gymnastics, human pyramids very popular at that time, and singing march songs while marching. Each lesson started and finished with singing. [...] The sports team in Zakrzew belonged to the best ones in the Borderland area, it even surpassed the German teams from Piła and Złotów. After our training, if it was still before 10 p.m., our young people formed a line on the street and singing along marched through the village. These were very touching moments. Singing shaped their patriotism and evoked national pride. Our gymnastics practice was often controlled by German gendarmes. To distract them and make them give up any intervention, when young people were leaving and singing, one had to diplomatically take care of them.¹⁶

In the summer, in many schools, teachers in cooperation with youth associations organized school events, often accompanied by performances and dancing. The whole local community participated in such events and "fraternal associations" with their banners also arrived from neighbouring villages. In his published memoirs, Jan Maćkowicz, a teacher from Kleszczyna wrote:

Almost all boys and girls belonged to the sports club. Football and volleyball teams were formed at that time. Volleyball was more popular. The teams would leave to play matches with other district associations, enjoying a lot of success. Football enjoyed less popularity due to the lack of a proper pitch [...]. The matters of sport were in the hands of youth instructor and teacher, Henryk Jaroszyk from the School Society in Złotów. In the evenings, he would arrive on his bike to school where young people were waiting for

¹⁵ Teachers were obliged by the German education authorities to use generalny binding didactic rules. Many of them, however, did not possess necessary qualifications to teach physical education. Their knowledge came from various methodology conferences and Reading a specialist journal, "Teacher's Guidebook" ("Poradnik Nauczycielski." They also obtained some help from Poland in the form of Physical Education textbooks. Sports instructors employed by the Union of Poles in Germany in particular districts were also a very precious help to Polish schools teachers. As mentioned earlier, many schools' former scouting activity should not be underestimated either. Thanks to teachers and scouting instructors, it was transferred to fieldwork, trips and camping. T. Jurek, *Polonijna kultura fizyczna...*, pp. 89–90.

¹⁶ B. Jęchorek, *Wśród polskich dzieci w Zakrzewie i Krajenke*, [in:] E. Makowski (study), *Pamiętniki nauczycieli złotowskich 1929–1939*, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, Poznań 1964, pp. 78–79.

him. He knew how to approach them; he organized sports teams, gave instructions, taught them youth songs and made them laugh with various anecdotes.¹⁷

Contrary to a widely spread net of primary schools, especially in Eastern Prussia, secondary schools were practically non-existent, and all the attempts of establishing new institutions undertaken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw and the Union of Poles in Germany were usually unsuccessful. The only lower-secondary schools were open in Bytom and Kwidzyń. The other attempts to establish more schools of this type fell through. It concerned two male lower-secondary schools in Piła and Złotów and a female lower-secondary school in Racibórz. There was one more unsuccessful attempt to create a lower-secondary school (seminary for kindergarten teachers) in Olstyn. The two schools in Bytom and Kwidzyń operated for quite a short time to satisfy current needs. Due to that fact, Polish youth from Germany was forced to attend schools on the territory of Poland, especially teacher training schools in Greater Poland, and most often in teacher seminars in Rogoźno Wlkp. (for boys) and Leszno (for girls).¹⁸

The first Polish lower-secondary school in Germany was open on 8 November 1932, in Bytom. This elite school was attended by 505 students, and till 1939 the final exams had been passed by 64 students. The other school was established after five years in Kwidzyń and its opening was celebrated on 10 November 1937. Overall, 162 students attended this institution. The school in Bytom and Kwidzyń were destined for boys only, thus they constituted the group of their students and graduates. The level of teaching in the aforesaid institutions was very high and learning there was a privilege. The most important task of Polish lower-secondary schools was “raising a comprehensively educated graduate – both mentally and physically.” In the aforesaid lower-secondary schools “a Physical Education, Art or Singing lesson was as important as Mathematics, Biology or Latin.”¹⁹ That was the didactic-educational ideal of both institutions.²⁰

¹⁷ J. Maćkiewicz, *Polska szkoła w Kleszczynie*, [in:] *Pamiętniki nauczycieli złotowskich...*, pp. 108–109. Other memoirs also describe common undertakings of Polish school teachers in the Borderland area aimed at sport and culture. See L. Kowalski, *Światła na wzgórzu*, [in:] *Pamiętniki nauczycieli złotowskich...*, p. 98; W. Maćkiewicz, *Polsko-Katolicka Szkoła Mniejszościowa w Radawnicy*, [in:] *Pamiętniki nauczycieli złotowskich...*, p. 115; L. Obst, *Z polską dziatwą w Nowej Świętej, Skicu i Buczku Wielkim*, [in:] *Pamiętniki nauczycieli złotowskich...*, p. 132; S. Piątek, *Z pamiętnika nauczyciela polskiej szkoły w Wiśniewce*, [in:] *Pamiętniki nauczycieli złotowskich...*, p. 137; J. Redlarski: *Szkoła przy krwawiącej granicy*, [in:] *Pamiętniki nauczycieli złotowskich...*, p. 140; W. Wittstock, *Pięć lat pracy nauczycielskiej w Zakrzewie – stolicy Polaków w Niemczech*, [in:] *Pamiętniki nauczycieli złotowskich...*, pp. 154–156, 158, 160.

¹⁸ H. Zieliński, *Polacy i polskość ziemi złotowskiej w latach 1918–1939*, Instytut Zachodni, Poznań 1949, p. 123.

¹⁹ W. Gębik, *Burzom dziejów nie dali się zgnieść*, Wydawnictwo Morskie, Gdynia 1967, pp. 75, 103, 249–252; Relacja pisemna W. Przybylskiego.

²⁰ The principal of the lower-secondary school in Kwidzyn saw the school’s mission in the following way: “We treated all school subjects like gymnastics equipment pieces used to shape and

Thanks to perceiving that curricular variety, physical education was put on a par with other subjects. Besides shaping physical strength and individual and team sports skills, the aim of the subject was to develop discipline, awareness of consequences, courage and national pride."²¹ Polish lower-secondary schools, similarly to aforementioned primary schools, used the German curriculum that initially included four hours of physical exercise, and from 1938 it was divided into six subject groups with physical education belonging to the first and most important group with 5 lessons per week. What is interesting and worth emphasizing, each student received more than a general grade from physical education on his school certificate as it was accompanied with detailed grades from several sports disciplines: boxing, gymnastics, sports games, athletics and swimming, which emphasized a high status physical education enjoyed.²²

The aforementioned aims concerning physical education were realized not only during physical education lessons, but also by participation in sports contests and active participation in the tourism-sightseeing movement. A textbook by Peter Jaeck of 1931 constituted a theoretical basis. In chapter III of his book, the author puts an emphasis on various practical classes, including basic, free and equipment gymnastics so popular in Germany, correction exercises, athletics, team games and classes (handball, football, palant, *pięstówka* – a team sport popular before the arrival of volleyball that replaced it – field games, dancing), swimming, rowing, winter sports (skiing, skating, luge), gliding and trips.²³ In each lower-secondary school a teachers council discussed and implemented an appropriate timetable and the classes were run by qualified physical education teachers. Most often there were three obligatory lessons in the school timetable, and the rest of them were placed in the afternoon programme as sports training.²⁴

During the spring-summer-autumn season, physical education and sports training classes took place mainly on school pitches, where students practiced above all athletics and team games. In the winter and when there were unfavourable weather conditions, physical education lessons were held in the school gymnasium, which was used for physical education lessons and sports training. The aim was to

exercise our bodies and minds – which was to develop Kwidzyn schoolers' physical and spiritual posture approaching the educational ideal of our school. Bearing this assumption in mind, it was not the most important thing in Kwidzyn how much a given student knew but how he knew it." W. Gębik, *Burzom dziejów...*, p. 119.

²¹ J. Lubos, *Dzieje Polskiego Gimnazjum w Bytomiu w świetle dokumentów i wspomnień*, Katowice 1971, pp. 39, 48, 84–85, 193–208.

²² H. Lehr, E. Osmańczyk, *Polacy spod znaku Rodła...*, p. 138.

²³ See more in: P. Jaeck, *Körperliche Erziehung. Handbuch des Unterrichts an höheren Schulen*. Bd 17. Frankfurt/M. 1931.

²⁴ BA Berlin, Reichsamtministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung, no 3264, p. 348; AAN Warszawa, Ambasada RP w Berlinie, no 9646, p. 22; Konsulat RP w Kwidzynie, no 7, pp. 40–42; AP Katowice, Prywatne Gimnazjum w Bytomiu, no 8, pp. 87–91; no 11, pp. 63–65; no 22, pp. 137–144; no 36, pp. 1–; no 282, p. 4; no 290, p. 4.

avourable weather conditions the classes were run in school gyms and then gymnastics, dancing, self-defence and boxing dominated. Each student had to learn how to swim, so lessons were run in local swimming pools or open swimming areas. Usually classes in open swimming areas were combined with trips and field marches. Swimming also enjoyed a high status. If, for any reasons, a given student did not master the skill of swimming, he was obliged to practise on his own and if he did not succeed he did not get promoted to the next grade. Lower-secondary school students could apply for swimming cards entitling them to swim in open waters.²⁵ The winter sports programme was the most problematic one as students could develop their skiing skills only during a short skiing camp in the mountains. Due to lack of specialist equipment and facilities, skating, luge, gliding and rowing were not practised.²⁶ A high status of physical education among the subjects taught in lower-secondary schools was confirmed by the fact that this subject was included into the final exams. It contributed to the growing level of physical education and the youth's care about their physical fitness, which was objectively verified during their final exams.²⁷

Supplementary evening schools became an interesting form of secondary education. They were established in the 1930s and lasted for a very short time. They were attended by students who, for various reasons, could not learn in the two open Polish lower-secondary schools. The Union of Poles in Germany and the Union of Polish School Societies tried to open these schools already in the second half of the 1920s. At that time they did not obtain permission for the establishment of these supplementary schools (Ländliche Fortbildungsschulen). The German authorities were afraid they could be converted into rural agricultural vocational schools. Finally, the schools were open once the permission was issued by the Administrative District in Piła on 16 July 1930. Twenty three supplementary general-education schools (Förderschulen) were created then. They operated just for a year as the district authorities cancelled their permission and on 1 October 1931 the schools were closed. Similar institutions were established in Opole Silesia. There were only 5 supplementary schools there, nevertheless, they caused concern of the local German authorities. They were finally closed in

²⁵ Only in one school year 1937/1938, the students of the lower-secondary school in Bytom obtained 97 special swimming cards, which shows the popularity of this form of developing students' swimming skills. T. Jurek, *Polonijna kultura fizyczna...*, p. 98.

²⁶ AP Katowice, Prywatne Gimnazjum w Bytomiu, no 4, pp. 14–15; no 188, p. 21.

²⁷ As far as the final exams were concerned, lower-secondary school students underwent special tests of physical fitness encompassing one sports game of their choice (football or palant), athletics discipline (usually a short 200-meter or 400-meter run, a chosen jump – high jump or long jump, and shot put), and gymnastics in the form of an exercise set performed with the help of various equipment. AP Katowice, Prywatne Gimnazjum w Bytomiu, nr 1, p. 5; no 5, p. 29.

1934, putting an end to a short period of time during which this specific form of Polish schooling developed.²⁸

As it has been mentioned before, lessons were divided into two parts, one of which (2 lessons) took place in the afternoon, within the framework of extra-curricular 2-lesson units. Such lessons were organized during the whole school year, they were of a sports nature and were called game afternoons (*Spielnachmittage*). Their programme included mostly games and plays, especially sports games and athletics – addressed to older students, and movement games and plays destined for younger students. Some of these classes took part outside school premises as far as marches, games and field athletics were concerned. This extracurricular programme often lasted longer than planned as children and teenagers eagerly participated in such lessons. Teachers from primary and lower-secondary schools saw it as an opportunity for students to meet again, that is why they encouraged them to participate in this form of school lessons. Every year, most schools also organized sports days filled with simple fitness contests, matches, selected athletics disciplines competitions. All the students took part in these events, and even their parents used to join in. The schools cooperated in this sports field, which resulted in joint contest and trips. These inter-school duels, usually taking part between two neighbouring schools, most frequently competed in very popular team games (volleyball, football, pal-ant, dodge ball) and athletics disciplines (short runs, steeplechase, high and long jump, shot put).²⁹

The Polish Lower-Secondary School in Bytom enjoyed the highest level of sports lessons. The student self-government of this school issued its own journal “Let’s go” (“*Idziemy*”), where a lot of space was devoted to physical education matters and school sport. In its policy statement article entitled “The sun, air and sport” (“*Słońce, powietrze, sport*”), the author presented the aim of its activity in the area of sport, emphasizing joint effort in creating joint strength.³⁰ The lower-secondary school in Kwidzyn had much less sports experience as it

²⁸ These establishments did not include physical education classes, which derived from their specificity of evening schools. AP Poznań, *Polski Związek Zachodni*, no 10, pp. 1–6; *Rejencja Piła*, no 393, pp. 6–7; no 3941, pp. 3–4, 245, 230–231, 238, 245, 348; H. Zieliński, *Polacy i polskość ziemi złotowskiej...*, p. 129.

²⁹ It can be confirmed by numerous entries in the archives of Polish schools from Buczek Wielki, Buntów, Nowa Kaletka and Woryty; “*Młody Polak w Niemczech*” 1936, no 3, p. 106; 1938, no 6, p. 213; “*Gazeta Olsztyńska*” 1932, no 290; 1938, no 294; W. Knosała, *Była nas gromadka spora*, Wydawnictwo Pojezierze, Olsztyn 1972, p. 99.

³⁰ The article reads as follows: “[...] the point is to create via sport the atmosphere of friendship, comradeship and peaceful coexistence in any situation. Comradeship is necessary to achieve victory. Being real sportsmen, we avoid to think “me”, and we replace it with “us”. If we learn to think in such a way, we will learn how to selflessly sacrifice “us” for the sake of the team. We’ll create strength.” “*Idziemy*” 1938, no 11, p. 11.

had been operating for only two years and was following into Bytom's footsteps. Sports classes were run in the Sports Circle of Kwidzyn Students, which organised inter-class and school competitions. The most popular sports disciplines were team games, gymnastics, athletics and boxing so that school championships were organized for them. Kwidzyn students competed in sports games with students from German schools. But after many victories the Poles were banned from league contests without any right to come back to them.³¹ In the school year 1939/1939, there were plans to create a lower-secondary school sports club, but increasingly difficult circumstances and the threat concerning the outbreak of the war put an end to these plans.³²

Conclusion

To conclude, it can be stated that physical education and sport in Polish education were much more widespread in primary schools, whose number and impact range clearly dominated over merely two secondary schools that were created. However, the level of teaching physical education and sport in the lower-secondary schools was high, which cannot be said about primary schools. Physical education and sport played mainly an integrative and patriotic role among the Polish youth. Evaluating physical education and school sport in Germany till 1939, one has to take into account the fact that they constituted – beside the Gymnastic Society "Sokol", sports movement, tourism and recreation – an element of Polish physical culture, creating one of the areas of national activity of Poles in that country. Physical education and school sport played a crucial role in the process of pro-Polish upbringing of children and youth, constituting a counterbalance to the wave of growing Germanisation. Thus, it can be stated that in the years 1918-1939, there was a constant battle for the development of Polish education in Germany. The problem concerned especially the former eastern borderlands, where sports activity of Polish local inhabitants was particularly intense. There, physical education and school sport were also of the

³¹ "Słowo na Warmii i Mazurach" 1939, no 33, p. 3; "Mały Polak w Niemczech" 1939, no 6/7, p. 29.

³² In the spring of 1939, when the international and bilateral relations between Poland and Germany exacerbated, the lower-secondary school in Kwidzyn created a 20-person security guard whose members were the fittest in the school's sports circle. The concerns were not misplaced as on 2 August 1939, the teachers and students of the Polish Lower-Secondary School in Kwidzyn were arrested and sent to Tapiaw near Königsberg, and then to Gruenhof and Strohbienen, where they were confined till 21 September 1939. In these places, they focused on sport and conspiracy in the Friends of the Deed Circle. Sport let them forget about traumatic experiences of arrest and the September campaign failure. B. Woltmann, *Wychowanie fizyczne młodzieży polskiej...*, p. 353.

highest quality. To a large extent, the exceptional engagement of Polish teachers contributed to this situation. The modern, attractive curriculum, encompassing the latest achievements of pedagogy in the area of physical education should not be underestimated. Concluding, one may state that physical education and school sport significantly contributed to the preservation of Polish culture, especially in a very difficult period of growing nationalist sentiments in Germany during the Third Reich. They also prevented assimilation with local inhabitants, especially in mid and western Germany, thanks to emphasising Polish national identity everywhere it was possible.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Physical education and sports in Polish education in Germany in the years 1918–1939*.

FUNDING

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Physical education and sports in Polish education in Germany in the years 1918–1939*.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/sit.2023.04.03>

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Sport w Kaliszu w latach 1918–1939. Zarys problematyki

Jak cytować [how to cite]: Jaroszewski J., *Sport w Kaliszu w latach 1918–1939. Zarys problematyki*, „Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe” 2023, t. 6, nr 4, s. 53–72.

The history of sport in Kalisz in 1918–1939. Outline of issues

Abstract

Regaining of independence by Poland enabled the development of sports movement in Kalisz. Until 1926 sport developed mainly under the influence of tradition and interests of Kalisz residents. After the May coup, by managing grants and sports facilities, a decisive influence on development of sport was gained by state authorities. The factors which inhibited the development of sports movement in Kalisz were the lack of training staff and insufficient number of sports facilities. Sports which enjoyed the greatest popularity in Kalisz during the interwar period were football, cycling and rowing. The highest level of training among footballers was demonstrated by teams of Sports Association “Prosna” and Kalisz Sports Club which took part in local games. Rowers from Kalisz Rowing Association belonged to the best in Poland (in 1934 1st place in the table of Polish Association of Rowing Clubs). Jerzy Koszutski, a rower from Kalisz, had the great honour of representing the national colours during the 9th Olympic Games in Amsterdam in 1928. A lot of emotions were aroused by boxing matches, athletics and table tennis. Fencing, horse riding and shooting sports were promoted by military and police environment as well as paramilitary organizations for utilitarian reasons.

Keywords: sport, Kalisz, the Second Polish Republic.

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Streszczenie

Odzyskanie niepodległości przez Polskę umożliwiło rozwój ruchu sportowego w Kaliszu. Do 1926 r. sport rozwijał się głównie pod wpływem tradycji i zainteresowań mieszkańców Kalisza. Po przewrocie majowym, poprzez zarządzanie dotacjami oraz obiektami sportowymi, decydujący wpływ na rozwój sportu uzyskały władze państwowe. Czynnikiem hamującym rozwój ruchu sportowego w Kaliszu były brak kadry szkoleniowej oraz niewystarczająca liczba obiektów sportowych. Największą popularnością w Kaliszu w okresie międzywojennym cieszyły się piłka nożna, kolarstwo i wioślarstwo. Najwyższy poziom wyszkolenia wśród piłkarzy demonstrowały zespoły Towarzystwa Sportowego Proсна i Kaliskiego Klubu Sportowego uczestniczące w rozgrywkach okręgowych. Wioślarze z Kaliskiego Towarzystwa Wioślarskiego należeli do najlepszych w Polsce (w 1934 r. – pierwsze miejsce w tabeli Polskiego Związku Towarzystw Wioślarskich). Zaszczytu reprezentowania barw narodowych podczas Igrzysk IX Olimpiady w Amsterdamie (1928 r.) dostąpił kaliski kolarz Jerzy Koszutski. Dużo emocji wzbudzały w Kaliszu mecze bokserskie, lekkoatletyczne i tenisa stołowego. Sport szermierczy, jeździecki i strzelectwo propagowane były, z powodów utylitarnych, przez środowiska wojskowe, policyjne i organizacje paramilitarne.

Słowa kluczowe: sport, Kalisz, II Rzeczpospolita Polska.

Wprowadzenie

Od średniowiecza w Kaliszu funkcjonował zwyczaj wycieczek (we wtorkowe i czwartkowe popołudnia wolne od zajęć) do pobliskich lasów dzieci uczących się w przykościelnych szkółkach (m.in. z Kościoła św. Józefa). Początków aktywności fizycznej mieszkańców należy doszukiwać się także w doskonaleniu strzelectwa w bractwie kurkowym w Kaliszu. Na przełomie XVIII i XIX w. Kalisz odwiedzali cyrkowcy, gimnastycy, siłacze oraz lekkoatleci, którzy demonstrowali pokazy sprawności¹. Ruch sportowy w Kaliszu zaczął się rozwijać wraz z powołaniem Kaliskiego Towarzystwa Cyklistów (1892 r.) i Cesarskiego Towarzystwa Ratowania Tonących w Kaliszu (1894 r.). Na torze kolarskim w Noskowie oraz kaliskich szosach organizowano zawody cyklistów z udziałem m.in. kolarzy z Warszawy, Wrocławia i Łodzi². Czołowym kaliskim cyklistą przełomu XIX i XX w. był Karol Szpecht. Wzrost poziomu sportowego wioślarzy Cesarskiego Towarzystwa Ratowania Tonących (od 1907 r. Kaliskie Towarzystwo Wioślarskie) sprzyjał rywalizacji z towarzystwami wioślarskimi. Zwycięstwa kaliskiej osady w regatach o Złote Wiosło Królestwa Polskiego w II dekadzie XX w. nadały jej miano „brylantowej osady”³. Opóźnienie w stosunku do innych zaborów wykazywał ruch sokoli w Królestwie Polskim. W Kaliszu Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne (TG) „Sokół”

¹ J. Jaroszewski, *Pionierzy aktywności fizycznej w Kaliszu*, „Polonia Maior Orientalis” 2019, t. 6, s. 36–40.

² „Cyklista” 1893, s. 48–53, 58; 1893, nr 51, s. 2; 1897, nr 39, s. 10; „Gazeta Kaliska” 1897, nr 46, s. 2; 1904, nr 226, s. 2; „Koło” 1895, nr 8, s. 90; „Sport” 1904, nr 38, s. 3.

³ Osada kaliska zwyciężyła w: Płocku (1910 r.), Włocławku (1911 r.), Krakowie (1912 r.) i Kaliszu (1913 r.).

wkrótce po powołaniu w 1906 r. zostało zamknięte przez władze carskie⁴. W 1911 r. z inicjatywy Kaliskiego Towarzystwa Wioślarskiego rozegrano w Kaliszu pierwszy mecz piłkarski z udziałem Łódzkiego Klubu Sportowego (ŁKS) i Warszawskiego Koła Sportowego Korona (1 : 1). Na początku XX w. zainteresowanie sportem zaczęła przejawiać mniejszość żydowska, zrzeszona w Żydowskim Klubie Gimnastyczno-Sportowym (1913 r.)⁵.

Celem pracy było przedstawienie rozwoju ruchu sportowego w Kaliszu w latach 1918–1939. Początek omawianego okresu – 1918 r. – wiąże się z odzyskaniem niepodległości przez Polskę, koniec – 1939 r. – z wybuchem II wojny światowej.

Metody i problemy badawcze

Niniejsza praca ma charakter źródłowy. Zastosowano w niej następujące metody badawcze: analizę źródeł historycznych (indukcja, dedukcja, synteza) oraz metodę porównawczą. Materiał źródłowy pochodzi z archiwów państwowych, prasy lokalnej i sportowej, oraz literatury dotyczącej dziejów sportu.

Problematyka ruchu sportowego w Kaliszu w latach 1918–1939 była podejmowana w innych publikacjach⁶. Problem badawczy sformułowany w tytule

⁴ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1906, nr 197, s. 1; 1906, nr 200, s. 2; 1906, nr 245, s. 1.

⁵ „Makabi” 1913–1938. XXV lat istnienia Ż.T.G.S. w Kaliszu, Kalisz 1938, s. 9.

⁶ J. Gaj, *Praca sportowa RKS TUR Kalisz*, [w:] A. Wohl, H. Młodzianowska, H. Laskiewicz (red.), *Sport robotniczy 1918–1939: opracowania, dokumenty, materiały*, t. 2, Sport i Turystyka, Warszawa 1964, s. 148–152; S. Elegañczyk, *Pięćdziesięciolecie Klubu Sportowego „Prosna”*, „Rocznik Kaliski” 1974, t. 7, s. 385; T. Krotos, *Sto lat Kaliskiego Towarzystwa Wioślarskiego*, „Rocznik Kaliski” 1994/1995, t. 25, s. 221–227; B. Kunicki, *Siedemdziesiąt pięć lat Kaliskiego Towarzystwa Wioślarskiego*, „Rocznik Kaliski” 1973, t. 6, s. 390–393; M. Małaszek, *75-lat Kaliskiego Klubu Sportowego* (1), „Kalisia Nowa” 2000, nr 3 (68), s. 23; K. Babiak, J. Heize, *Kultura fizyczna i turystyka*, [w:] J. Babiak (red.), *Dorobek i perspektywy województwa kaliskiego*, Towarzystwo Wiedzy Powszechnej, Kalisz 1979, s. 148–149; A. Janiak, *Rozwój lekkoatletyki na Ziemi Kaliskiej w latach 1919–2008*, t. 1–2, Wydawnictwo Uczelni Państwowej Wyższej Szkoły Zawodowej w Kaliszu, Gorzów Wlkp. 2011; J.S. Stabno, *Kaliszanie na ringu 1932–2019*, t. 1–2, Wydawnictwo My Wojownicy, Wrocław 2021; J. Jaroszewski, *Polski ruch sportowy w powiecie kaliskim w latach 1918–1939*, [w:] L. Nowak (red.), *Z najnowszej historii kultury fizycznej w Polsce*, Zamiejscowy Wydział Kultury Fizycznej poznańskiej AWF, Gorzów Wlkp. 2006, s. 187–205; tenże, *Żydowski ruch sportowy w powiecie kaliskim w latach 1918–1939*, [w:] T. Jurek (red.), *Z dziejów kultury fizycznej mniejszości narodowych w Polsce w XX w.*, Zamiejscowy Wydział Kultury Fizycznej poznańskiej AWF, Gorzów Wlkp. 2007, s. 91–100; tenże, *Wychowanie fizyczne, higiena i sport szkolny w szkołach kaliskich w latach 1918–1939*, [w:] S. Kowalska (red.), *Rola elit społecznych w ochronie dziedzictwa kulturowego w społecznościach lokalnych*, Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, Poznań – Kalisz 2010, s. 37–56; tenże, *Kultura fizyczna w organizacjach młodzieżowych w powiecie kaliskim w latach 1918–1939*, [w:] J. Dżereń (red.), *Z dziejów kultury fizycznej Polski oraz wybranych regionów i mniejszości narodowych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Szkoły Wyższej im. Pawła Włodkowica – Wydawnictwo Naukowe Novum, Płock 2010, s. 479–500; tenże, *Sport kobiet w Kaliszu do 1939 roku*, [w:] R. Urban, L. Nowak, A. Ko-

opracowania traktowany był dotychczas przyczynkowo. Autor ma świadomość, że artykuł nie wyczerpuje tytułowego problemu. Przedstawienie pełnego obrazu wymaga obszerniejszej publikacji.

Wysunięto następujące problemy badawcze:

1. Jakie uwarunkowania determinowały rozwój ruchu sportowego w Kaliszu w latach 1919–1939?
2. Jakie dyscypliny sportowe cieszyły się największym zainteresowaniem mieszkańców Kalisza?
3. W jakich dyscyplinach kaliscy sportowcy odnosili największe sukcesy?

Wyniki

Podstawy organizacji ruchu sportowego w Kaliszu

Po odzyskaniu przez Polskę niepodległości w 1918 r. zaistniały dogodne warunki do reaktywacji utworzonych w czasach zaborów klubów i stowarzyszeń sportowych, oraz do powstawania nowych. Zainteresowanie społeczne ruchem sportowym doprowadziło do powołania organizacji Związku Polskich Związków Sportowych – Polski Komitet Olimpijski (1925 r.)⁷ będącej najważniejszym organem społecznego nurtu w polskim sporcie. W 1927 r. władze państwowe, dążąc do podporządkowania celom społeczno-politycznym wychowania fizycznego i przysposobienia wojskowego, powołały Państwowy Urząd Wychowania Fizycznego i Przysposobienia Wojskowego (PUWFiPW). Zarządzał on ruchem sportowym przez okręgowe urzędy oraz wojewódzkie, powiatowe i miejskie komitety wychowania fizycznego i przysposobienia wojskowego⁸. W Kaliszu Miejski Komitet Wychowania Fizycznego i Przysposobienia Wojskowego (WFiPW) utworzono w 1927 r.⁹ W 1928 r. przy dowództwach okręgów korpusów powołano okręgowe

walczyk (red.), *Kultura fizyczna w czasach zaborów i w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Zamiejscowy Wydział Kultury Fizycznej poznańskiej AWF, Gorzów Wlkp. 2012, s. 207–224; tenże, *Physical activity of Ukrainian people interned in camps on the territory of Łódzkie voivodeship in years 1920–1938*, „Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe” 2020, t. 3, nr 3, s. 23–40; tenże, *Ruch sportowy w Policji Państwowej w powiecie kaliskim w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym*, „Polonia Maior Orientalis” 2021, t. 8, s. 183–206; Z. Kościelak, *Kaliskie siatkarki*, Kalisz 2013; tenże, *Kaliscy biegacze; w przełajach, maratonach, Kaliskiej Setce, Biegu Ptolemeusza i ultra biegach*, Kalisz 2015; tenże, *Kaliscy kolarze*, Kalisz 2016; Z. Kościelak, D. Dymalski, *Kaliscy bokserzy: 80 lat 1932–2012*, Kalisz 2012; ciż, *Piłkarska Calisia: 75 lat 1937–2012*, Kalisz 2012.

⁷ E. Małolepszy, *Z dziejów organizacji i zarządzania kulturą fizyczną w Polsce w latach 1918–1998*, „Prace Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Częstochowie. Kultura Fizyczna” 2001, z. 4, s. 88.

⁸ L. Szymański, *Model zarządzania kulturą fizyczną w II Rzeczypospolitej i Polsce Ludowej*, „Wychowanie Fizyczne i Sport” 1997, nr 1–2, s. 324–327.

⁹ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1927, nr 290, s. 3.

urzędy WFIPW¹⁰, którym podporządkowano rejonowe, obwodowe i powiatowe komendy wychowania fizycznego i przysposobienia wojskowego. Zadania powołanej w 1938 r. Miejskiej Komendy WFIPW w Kaliszu przejęła Powiatowa Komenda WFIPW w Kaliszu¹¹. Komenda Miejska WFIPW w Kaliszu posiadała pełną decyzyjność w sprawach sportu na terenie miasta Kalisza. Praca Miejskiego Komitetu WFIPW w Kaliszu stopniowo słabła, okresowo wręcz zamierała¹². Faktycznie jej rola ograniczała się do zabezpieczania środków materialnych¹³, część funduszy na działalność sportową w Kaliszu dotował Obwodowy Urząd WFIPW¹⁴.

Ważnym elementem struktur organizacyjnych ruchu sportowego była przynależność do związków sportowych. W Kaliszu należeli do nich bokserzy, kolarze, lekkoatleci, piłkarze, strzelcy, tenisiści stołowi i wioślarze. W Kaliszu funkcjonowały podokreśli: lekkoatletyczny (1926 r.)¹⁵, piłki nożnej (1928 r.)¹⁶, strzelecki (1934 r.)¹⁷ i kolarski (1938 r.)¹⁸.

Odradzanie się organizacji sportowych w Kaliszu zainicjowało w 1918 r. Kaliskie Towarzystwo Wioślarskie (KTW). Pod koniec omawianego okresu, w 1938 r. w Kaliszu funkcjonowało 26 organizacji sportowych¹⁹.

¹⁰ L. Szymański, *Kultura fizyczna w polityce II Rzeczypospolitej*, AWF we Wrocławiu, Wydawnictwo Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 1995, s. 28.

¹¹ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1939, nr 112, s. 6.

¹² „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1936, nr 129, s. 6.

¹³ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1930, nr 16, s. 3; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1938, nr 68, s. 6.

¹⁴ Archiwum Państwowe w Kaliszu (APK), Starostwo Powiatowe w Kaliszu (SPK), sygn. 277, Wychowanie fizyczne i przysposobienie wojskowe, k. 5, Sprawozdanie z kontroli powiatowych i miejskich Komitetów wf i pw O.K. VII, przeprowadzonej przez kpt. int Polańskiego T. z okręgu WF i PW. O.K. VII na podstawie rezp. P.U.WF i PW Nr. 016/6 Spot. z dn. 21 maja 1932.

¹⁵ S. Zaborniak, *Z tradycji lekkoatletyki w Polsce w latach 1919–1939*, t. 2: *Powstanie i działalność Polskiego Związku Lekkiej Atletyki*, Wyższa Szkoła Społeczno-Przyrodnicza w Lublinie, Lublin 2011, s. 41; „Gazeta Kaliska” 1926, nr 256, s. 3.

¹⁶ „Kurier Łódzki” 1928, nr 201, s. 10; 1935, nr 346, s. 7.

¹⁷ APK, SPK, sygn. 150, Polski Związek Strzelectwa Sportowego – Oddział w Kaliszu, k. 15, L. dz. 25/35 Kalisz13.II.1935 r.

¹⁸ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1938, nr 68, s. 6.

¹⁹ „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 350, s. 1. Najaktywniejszymi w latach 1918–1939 były: KTW, TG „Sokół” (1919 r.), Kaliskie Towarzystwo Wioślarek (1921 r.), Towarzystwo Sportowe Proсна (1922 r.), Towarzystwo Cyklistów w Kaliszu (1922 r.), Kaliski Klub Sportowy (1925 r.), Bractwo Kurkowe w Kaliszu (1925 r.), Zjednoczenie Polskiej Młodzieży Pracującej Orle (1925 r.), Stowarzyszenie Młodzieży Polskiej w Kaliszu (1927 r.), Klub Sportowy Herkules (1928 r.), Policijny Klub Sportowy w Kaliszu (1930 r.), Międzyszkolny Klub Sportowy (1932 r.), Klub Sportowy Strzelec w Kaliszu (1933 r.), Towarzystwo Sportowe Garbarnia (1934 r.), Robotniczy Klub Sportowy Towarzystwa Uniwersytetu Robotniczego (1937 r.). Wśród mniejszości żydowskiej najprężniej działały: Kaliski Żydowski Klub Gimnastyczno-Sportowy (1918 r.), Haszomer Hacair w Kaliszu (1921 r.), Robotniczy Klub Sportowy Jutrzenka (1926 r.), Żydowski Klub Sportowy Hakoach w Kaliszu (1928 r.), Żydowskie Towarzystwo Wioślarskie (1929 r.), Robotnicze Stowarzyszenie Wychowania Fizycznego Jutrznia (1930 r.) Robotniczy Klub Sportowy Hapoel oddział w Kaliszu (1935 r.). Wśród mniejszości ukraińskiej utworzono: Towarzystwo Sportowo-Gimnastyczne „Sokół obozu

Utrudnieniem dla odradzającego się ruchu sportowego w Kaliszu był brak kadry szkoleniowej, obiektów sportowych oraz środków finansowych. Sytuację pogarszało małe zainteresowanie władz lokalnych, co ograniczało działalność Miejskiego Komitetu WFiPW w Kaliszu i Miejskiej Komendy WFiPW w Kaliszu. Początkowo kadrę szkoleniową stanowili instruktorzy z TG „Sokół” w Kaliszu, nauczyciele wychowania fizycznego oraz posiadający najwyższy stopień wykształcenia zawodnicy. Problemu nie rozwiązało powołanie stanowiska instruktora wychowania fizycznego w Kaliszu oraz kursy instruktorskie prowadzone przez związki okręgowe (Poznański Okręgowy Związek Bokserski)²⁰ oraz Polski Komitet Olimpijski (kurs trenerów wioślarstwa)²¹. Pozytywnie na stan kadry szkoleniowej wpłynęły kursy przewodników organizowane po 1935 r.²² Dużym utrudnieniem w rozwoju ruchu sportowego był brak obiektów sportowych – większość wybudowano z inicjatywy społecznej. W latach 1919–1939 w Kaliszu funkcjonowały: Stadion Miejski w Kaliszu, 7 przystani wioślarskich²³, 6 boisk do piłki nożnej, 1 tor kolarski, 2 korty tenisowe, 2 strzelnice, 5 sal gimnastycznych, 2 otwarte pływalnie. Największą inwestycją sportową był Stadion Miejski (1927 r.)²⁴, który stał się centrum życia sportowego w Kaliszu.

Wyniki rywalizacji sportowej

Zmagania sportowe w Kaliszu zainaugurowały w sierpniu 1918 r. regaty wioślarskie KTW²⁵. W latach 1918–1939 najpopularniejszymi dyscyplinami sportowymi w Kaliszu były piłka nożna, kolarstwo i wioślarstwo. Na boiska piłkarskie, tor kolarski oraz regaty wioślarskie ściągają wielotysięczne tłumy kibiców. Największe, liczące do 6 tysięcy, dopingowały mecze piłkarskie. Rozgrywki okręgowe kaliskie drużyny prowadziły w ramach Łódzkiego Związku Okręgowego Piłki Nożnej. W 1939 r. drużyny kaliskie przyłączono do okręgu poznańskiego, wybuch wojny uniemożliwił rozgrywki w okręgu poznańskim.

Do 1927 r. najwyższy poziom sportowy demonstrowali piłkarze Towarzystwa Sportowego (TS) Proсна Kalisz (klasa B). Do klasy C należały: Żydowski Klubu Gimnastyczno-Sportowy (ŻKGS), Kaliski Klub Sportowy (KKS) i Robotniczy Klub

Kalisz”, Towarzystwo Zaporozec oraz Koło Sportowe. Ludność rosyjska utworzyła Rosyjski Klub Sportowy Wołga (1933 r.).

²⁰ J.S. Stabno, *Kaliszanie na ringu 1932–2019*, t. 2, s. 356; *Sprawozdanie z działalności Zarządu Poznańskiego Okręgowego Związku Bokserskiego za rok 1938/39*, s. 12.

²¹ „Sport Wodny” 1934, nr 19, s. 366.

²² „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1936, nr 103, s. 6; 1936, nr 110, s. 6; 1936, nr 122, s. 6.

²³ Przystanie wioślarskie posiadały: Kaliskie Towarzystwo Wioślarskie, Towarzystwo Wiośłarek w Kaliszu (1927 r.), Przystań Wioślarska Młodzieży Szkolnej (1928 r.), Klub Wioślarski z 1930 r. (1930 r.), Żydowskie Towarzystwo Gimnastyczno-Sportowe Makabi (1933 r.), Wojskowy Klubu Sportowy Proсна (1934 r.), Policyjny Klub Sportowy (1937 r.).

²⁴ APK, Archiwum miasta Kalisza (AmK), sygn. 261, Stadion Tyniecki, k. 233, Do Zarządu Miejskiego Komitetu W.F. i P.W. w Kaliszu.

²⁵ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1918, nr 86, s. 2.

Sportowy (RKS) Jutrzenka²⁶. Po 1928 r. do klasy A zaliczono TS Proсна Kalisz, w klasie B (grupa kaliska) grały: KKS, ŻKGS, RKS Jutrzenka, Żydowski Klub Sportowy (ŻKS) Hakoah w Kaliszu oraz TG „Sokół” w Zduńskiej Woli²⁷. W 1928 r. w skład utworzonego Podokręgu Kaliskiego²⁸ weszły: KKS, ŻKGS, RKS Jutrzenka, TS Proсна (II) i ŻKS Hakoah. Do 1939 r. mistrzostwo klasy B i prawo walki o grę w klasie A (okręgowej) wywalczyły: TS Proсна, KKS i KS Strzelec. Dwa z tych klubów prowadziły rozgrywki w klasie A: TS Proсна (1927, 1928, 1930 r.)²⁹ i KKS (1931, 1934 r.)³⁰. Każdorazowo ich pobyt w klasie A trwał jeden sezon.

Największą frekwencją cieszyły się mecze z A-klasowymi zespołami oraz spotkania międzymiastowe i międzyklubowe. Dwukrotnie w Kaliszu gościł Klub Sportowy Hakoah Wiedeń (1927, 1929 r.). Spotkania zakończyły się zdecydowanym zwycięstwem gości (0 : 5) i (1 : 6)³¹.

Popularnością w Kaliszu cieszyła się najstarsza z tamtejszych dyscyplin sportowych, jaką było kolarstwo. Pierwszymi kaliskimi cyklistami w odrodzonej Polsce byli członkowie reaktywowanego w 1922 r. Kaliskiego Towarzystwa Cyklistów (KTC)³², kolejnymi kolarze z TS Proсна (1924 r.)³³, ŻKGS w Kaliszu, Kaliskiego Towarzystwa Kolarskiego (1933 r.), KKS (1934 r.)³⁴, RKS w Kaliszu (1936 r.)³⁵ oraz Policijnego Klubu Sportowego (PKS) w Kaliszu (1937 r.)³⁶. Powołany w 1938 r. Podokręg Kaliski Poznańskiego Okręgowego Związku Kolarskiego rozwiązano w 1939 r.³⁷ Wiodącymi klubami były KTC oraz KKS. Organizowały one wyścigi kolarskie oraz mistrzostwa Kalisza. Najbardziej utytułowanymi kolarzami byli Jerzy Koszutski (KTC, TS Proсна) i Zygmunt Sobolewski (KTC). J. Koszutski w latach 1925–1929 należał do najlepszych sprinterów w Polsce. W 1928 r. reprezentował Polskę podczas Igrzysk IX Olimpiady w Amsterdamie (w sprincie dotarł do ćwierćfinału)³⁸. Po 1929 r. zakończył karierę sportową, poświęcił się muzyce, okazjonalnie brał udział w wyścigach w Kaliszu (1931, 1933 r.)³⁹. Duże sukcesy odnosił Z. Sobolewski, uczestnik m.in. mistrzostw Polski (1926 r. – V miejsce,

²⁶ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1926, nr 282, s. 2.

²⁷ „Kurier Łódzki” 1928, nr 65, s. 4; 1928, nr 91, s. 8.

²⁸ „Kurier Łódzki” 1928, nr 201, s. 10; 1935, nr 346, s. 7.

²⁹ „Przegląd Sportowy” 1927, nr 36, s. 8; „Kurier Łódzki” 1929, nr 5, s. 8; 1930, nr 342, s. 7; 1930, nr 288, s. 6.

³⁰ „Kurier Łódzki” 1931, nr 114, s. 6; 1934, nr 213, s. 6.

³¹ „Stadion” 1927, nr 44, s. 8; „Gazeta Kaliska” 1927, nr 287, s. 3; 1929, nr 188, s. 3.

³² „Gazeta Kaliska” 1922, nr 172, s. 3.

³³ S. Elegañczyk, *Pięćdziesięciolecie klubu sportowego „Proсна”*, s. 385.

³⁴ APK, Biblioteka, sygn. 899, *Kaliski Klub Sportowy „Włóknarz”. Zarys historiograficzny 1925–1975*, s. 5.

³⁵ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1936, nr 10, s. 6.

³⁶ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1938, nr 86, s. 6.

³⁷ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1938, nr 68, s. 6; 1939, nr 93, s. 7; 1939, nr 127, s. 6.

³⁸ „Stadion” 1928, nr 34, s. 13.

³⁹ „Stadion” 1931, nr 27, s. 19; „Raz, Dwa Trzy” 1933, nr 34, s. 12.

1928 r. – IV miejsce)⁴⁰, mistrzostw województwa łódzkiego (wicemistrz w 1929, 1930 r.)⁴¹ oraz Biegu dookoła Polski (1928, 1929 r.)⁴² i Dookoła Ziemi Kaliskiej (zwyciężył w 1929 i 1930 r.)⁴³.

Kolarstwo wśród kaliszczan popularyzowały trasy wyścigów kolarskich, m.in. Łódź–Kalisz–Łódź⁴⁴, Bieg dookoła Polski (1929 r.)⁴⁵, wyścig Berlin–Warszawa (1934 r.)⁴⁶ oraz zorganizowane na torze kolarskim w Kaliszu mistrzostwa Polski (1931, 1938 r.)⁴⁷.

Wielotysięczne tłumy widzów nad brzeg Proсны ściągali regaty wioślarskie, najczęściej organizowane przez KTW. Udział w nich brały osady: KTW, Towarzystwa Wioślarek (TW) w Kaliszu, PKS, Klubu Wioślarskiego z 1930 r. oraz Wojskowego Klubu Sportowego (WKS) Proсна. Od 1934 r. przebieg regat nadzorował Kaliski Międzyklubowy Komitet Wioślarski (1934 r.)⁴⁸. Tor wioślarski na Prośnie, poza kaliskimi, gościł osady z Warszawy, Poznania, Włocławka i Bydgoszczy.

Najwyżej klasyfikowanym klubem z Kalisza było KTW – w 1934 r. wywalczyło pierwszą lokatę w tabeli Polskiego Związku Towarzystw Wioślarskich⁴⁹. Czterech wioślarzy⁵⁰ powołano do drużyny olimpijskiej. Zdekompletowanie jej w 1935 r.⁵¹ uniemożliwiło start w Igrzyskach XI Olimpiady w Berlinie (1936 r.). Poza KTW sukcesy na regatach ogólnopolskich odnosiły osady WKS Proсна i PKS⁵². W 1936 r. czwórka z PKS wywalczyła wicemistrzostwo Polski⁵³.

Dużym zainteresowaniem wśród mieszkańców Kalisza cieszyła się lekkoatletyka. Jej propagatorami w Kaliszu byli uczestnicy zlotów sokolich⁵⁴ oraz igrzysk sportowych. Lekkoatleci rywalizowali w ramach łódzkiego Okręgowego Związku Lekkoatletycznego (ŁOZLA)⁵⁵, przy którym w 1926 r. powołano Kaliski Podokręg⁵⁶. Liczba sekcji zrzeszonych w Podokręgu wynosiła średnio 3–5. W latach 1932–1938 sekcje lekkoatletyczne funkcjonowały w: TG „Sokół”, Związku Strzeleckim,

⁴⁰ „Kolarz Polski” 1926, nr 8, s. 6; „Stadion” 1928, nr 24, s. 12; „Przegląd Sportowy” 1928, nr 28, s. 1.

⁴¹ „Przegląd Sportowy” 1928, nr 26, s. 2; „Kurier Łódzki” 1929, nr 176, s. 7.

⁴² „Przegląd Sportowy” 1928, nr 43, s. 3; 1929, nr 49, s. 2; „Stadion” 1928, nr 33, s. 2

⁴³ „Stadion” 1929, nr 31, s. 2; 1930, nr 33, s. 6; „Przegląd Sportowy” 1930, nr 64, s. 3.

⁴⁴ „Stadion” 1926, nr 36, s. 11.

⁴⁵ „Przegląd Sportowy” 1929, nr 46, s. 2.

⁴⁶ „Raz, Dwa Trzy” 1934, nr 35, s. 10; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1934, nr 233, s. 6.

⁴⁷ „Kurier Łódzki” 1931, nr 260, s. 8; „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 188, s. 1.

⁴⁸ „Sport Wodny” 1934, nr 9, s. 230; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1934, nr 155, s. 6.

⁴⁹ APK, SPK 1918–1939, sygn. 278, Wychowanie fizyczne i przysposobienie wojskowe, k. 20, Sprawozdanie sportowe Kaliskiego Towarzystwa Wioślarskiego za rok 1934.

⁵⁰ Byli to: T. Tyszner, Z. Tuczyński, T. Czapliski i R. Odziemski.

⁵¹ A. Zmyślony, *100-lecie Kaliskiego Towarzystwa Wioślarskiego 1894–1994. Szkic monograficzny*, Komitet Organizacyjny obchodów 100-lecia Kaliskiego Towarzystwa Wioślarskiego, Kalisz 1994, s. 9.

⁵² „Sport Wodny” 1935, nr 14, s. 271–275; „Raz, Dwa, Trzy” 1935, nr 32, s. 3, 6.

⁵³ „Kurier Bydgoski” 1936, nr 173, s. 5; „Przegląd Sportowy” 1936, nr 62, s. 4.

⁵⁴ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1919, nr 134, s. 4.

⁵⁵ „ABC Kaliskie” 1939, nr 97, s. 1.

⁵⁶ S. Zaborniak, *Z tradycji lekkoatletyki w Polsce w latach 1919–1939*, t. 2, s. 41.

WKS Proсна, Stowarzyszeniu Młodzieży Polskiej, Żydowskim Towarzystwie Gimnastyczno-Sportowym (ŻTGS) Makabi, Katolickim Stowarzyszeniu Męskim (KSM), Zjednoczeniu Polskiej Młodzieży Pracującej (ZPMP) Orłę w Kaliszu.

Głównymi zawodami organizowanymi przez Podokręg Kaliski ŁOZLA były mistrzostwa lekkoatletyczne okręgu, pięciobój mężczyzn, trójbój kobiet oraz mecze międzymiastowe i okolicznościowe. Z powodu złej pracy zarządu podokręgu mistrzostw Kalisza nie rozgrywano regularnie. W latach 30. XX w. tytuł mistrzów okręgu wywalczyły następujące drużyny: wśród mężczyzn – TG „Sokół” (1931–1933, 1937 r.), ZPMP Orłę (1938 r.), wśród kobiet – Związek Strzelecki (1931–1933), ŻTGS Makabi (1934, 1935, 1938 r.), TG „Sokół” (1937 r.)⁵⁷. Najlepsi kaliscy lekkoatleci rywalizowali w mistrzostwach okręgu łódzkiego. Największe sukcesy odniosły: Maria Ficówna (2-krotna rekordzistka ŁOZLA w 1927 i 1928 r.⁵⁸, w 1928 r. – III miejsce w skoku w dal, wżwyz oraz pchnięciu kulą), Maria Szalówna (w 1928 r. – II miejsce w biegu na 800 m i rzucie oszczepem) oraz Zofia Smętkówna (w 1928 r. – III miejsce w biegu na 800 m)⁵⁹. W 1939 r. w Kaliszu w mistrzostwach ŁOZLA drugie miejsce w pięcioboju wywalczył S. Smyk, w kategorii kobiet zwyciężyła Zwierzakówna (oboje z Kalisza)⁶⁰.

Emocje wśród kaliszczan wzbudzały walki bokserskie, których rozwój nastąpił po 1930 r. W latach 1930–1939 w Kaliszu zajęcia bokserskie prowadzono okresowo w 9 klubach sportowych⁶¹. Po 1935 r. tylko trzy kluby szkoliły pięściarzy – KKS i ŻTGS Makabi (1935–1936, 1938–1939) oraz KW30 (1937 r.)⁶². Mistrzostwa Kalisza w boksie zapoczątkowano w 1932 r.⁶³, tytuły mistrzowskie zdobyły drużyny: MKS (1932, 1933 r.), KS Strzelec (1934 r.) i KKS (1935, 1937, 1938 r.)⁶⁴. W 1938 r. Stanisław Szrajter wywalczył mistrzostwo okręgu łódzkiego (waga kogucia)⁶⁵ oraz wicemistrzostwo Polski⁶⁶. Poza nim najwyższy poziom wyszkolenia osiągnęli Walenty Pietrzak⁶⁷ i Jan Anczykowski⁶⁸.

⁵⁷ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1933, nr 159, s. 6; 1934, nr 283, s. 6; 1935, nr 152, s. 8; 1937, nr 260, s. 6; „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 189, s. 1.

⁵⁸ „Kurier Łódzki” 1928, nr 192, s. 9.

⁵⁹ „Stadion” 1928, nr 25, s. 12; „Kurier Łódzki” 1928, nr 213, s. 9; 1929, nr 59, s. 8.

⁶⁰ „Kurier Łódzki” 1939, nr 231, s. 7.

⁶¹ Były to: ŻTGS Makabi, WKS Proсна Kalisz, Brith Trumpeldor Kalisz, Międzyszkolny Klub Sportowy, PKS w Kaliszu, Związek Strzelecki (KS Strzelec), TG „Sokół” w Kaliszu, KKS oraz KW 30.

⁶² „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1937, nr 61, s. 6.

⁶³ J.S. Stabno, *Kaliszanie na ringu 1932–2019*, t. 2, s. 355.

⁶⁴ „Przegląd Sportowy” 1932, nr 35, s. 5; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1933, nr 84, s. 6; 1934, nr 103, s. 6; 1935, nr 117, s. 8; 1937, nr 61, s. 8; 1938, nr 119, s. 6.

⁶⁵ „Kurier Łódzki” 1938, nr 72, s. 5.

⁶⁶ „Przegląd Sportowy” 1938, nr 33, s. 4; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1938, nr 94, s. 6.

⁶⁷ Do 1939 r.: mistrz m. Kalisza (w. półciężka) i drużynowy mistrz Kalisza (1934 r.); mistrz okręgu Poznańskiego Związku Strzeleckiego (1934 r.), w latach 1936–1939 4-krotny mistrz okręgu łódzkiego, wicemistrz Polski w wadze półciężkiej (1936, 1938 i 1939 r.) oraz brązowy medalista mistrzostw Polski w wadze półciężkiej (1937 r.); 2-krotny drużynowy wicemistrz Polski (z IKP Łódź, 1935/1936 i 1936/1937).

⁶⁸ Pięściarz Międzyszkolnego Klubu Sportowego, następnie Warty Poznań i Kaliskiego Klubu Sportowego.

Miłośników w Kaliszu, poza piłką nożną, posiadały też inne gry zespołowe: siatkówka, koszykówka i szczypiorniak. Zdobyte na szkolnych boiskach umiejętności doskonalone były w latach 30. XX w. w 11 organizacjach⁶⁹. Żadna sekcja nie należała do związków okręgowych. Rywalizacja sportowa ograniczała się do meczów międzyklubowych i mistrzostw Kalisza. W mistrzostwach nie uczestniczyły drużyny żydowskie, którym w sposób formalny uniemożliwiono udziału. Rozgrywki wskazywały rosnącą popularność gier sportowych. W 1938 r. w mistrzostwach (letnich) uczestniczyło 9 zespołów (4 kobiece i 5 męskich), w 1939 r. ich liczba wzrosła do 17 (7 żeńskich i 10 męskich). Pod koniec lat 30. XX w. zimowe mistrzostwa kobiet organizowano tylko w siatkówce – zwyciężały siatkarki Bielarni (1938, 1939 r.). Wśród siatkarki wygrywały PKS (1938 r.) i ZPMP Orłę (1939 r.)⁷⁰. Sezon letni 1938 r. zdominowali zawodnicy ZPMP Orłę, zdobywając tytuły mistrzowskie w siatkówce, koszykówce i szczypiorniaku. W 1939 r. najlepszych siatkarki i koszykarzy posiadał WKS Prosna. Wśród pań swój prymat potwierdziły siatkarki KKS Bielarnia (1938, 1939 r.)⁷¹.

Po 1925 r. zainteresowanie ping-pongiem wykazywała polska młodzież gimnazjalna i mniejszość żydowska. Pierwszą sekcję ping-ponga powołano w 1926 r. w RKS Jutrzenka⁷², następne w: TG „Sokół” w Kaliszu (1926–1927)⁷³, ŻKGS (1927 r.)⁷⁴, KKS (1927 r.)⁷⁵ i ŻKS Hakoah (1927 r.)⁷⁶, KS Herkules (1929 r.)⁷⁷, WKS Prosna, Robotniczym Stowarzyszeniu Wychowania Fizycznego Gwiazda i KTW (1934 r.)⁷⁸. Do Łódzkiego Okręgowego Związku Tenisa Stołowego należało tylko ŻTGS Makabi (klasa A). Od 1933 r. koordynatorem rozgrywek był Komitet Ping-Ponga w Kaliszu (1933 r.), następnie Międzyklubowy Komitet Drużyn Chrześcijańskich Tenisa Stołowego w Kaliszu (1935 r.)⁷⁹. Po 1935 r. uniemożliwiono udział w mistrzostwach Kalisza ludności żydowskiej. W pierwszych mistrzostwach Kalisza w 1928 r. udział wzięły 4 kluby⁸⁰, a tytuły mistrzowskie zdobyli: w grze pojedynczej – Z. Smętkówna

⁶⁹ Były to: PKS, ŻTGS Makabi, Stowarzyszenie Młodzieży Polskiej, KS Strzelec, KS Legion Młodych, KKS Bielarnia, RKS, WKS Prosna, kluby przyfabryczne: Lalki i Pluszownia, harcerstwo oraz 29. Pułk Strzelców Kaniowskich.

⁷⁰ „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 96, s. 1; 1939, nr 70, s. 1; 1939, nr 80, s. 1; 1939, nr 138, s. 1.

⁷¹ „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 198, s. 1; 1938, nr 200, s. 1; 1938, nr 233, s. 1; 1938, nr 234, s. 1; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1939, nr 176, s. 8; 1939, nr 178, s. 7.

⁷² „Gazeta Kaliska” 1926, nr 206, s. 3.

⁷³ A. Wojciechowski, *Rozwój wychowania fizycznego i sportu w Kaliszu do 1939 roku*, praca magisterska, Akademia Wychowania Fizycznego we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 1989, s. 64.

⁷⁴ „Makabi” 1913–1938..., s. 14.

⁷⁵ APK, Biblioteka, sygn. 899 *Kaliski Klub Sportowy „Włóknarz”...*, s. 38

⁷⁶ APK, SPK 1918–1939, sygn. 154, Żydowskie Stowarzyszenia Oświatowe, Religijne i inne, k. 47. Do Starostwa.

⁷⁷ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1929, nr 1929, s. 3.

⁷⁸ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1934, nr 332, s. 6.

⁷⁹ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1933, nr 52, s. 6; 1935, nr 24, s. 6.

⁸⁰ Były to: ŻKS Hakoah, KS Herkules, KKS, TG „Sokół” i ŻKGS.

(KKS), J. Zieleniewski (KS Herkules), w grze podwójnej – J. Zieleniewski i S. Szyszczński (KS Herkules)⁸¹. W latach 1929, 1933 i 1934 r. tytuły mistrzowskie wywalczyła drużyna ZKGS (ŻTGS Makabi)⁸². Kolejne tytuły wywalczyły: ZPMP Orłę (1935, 1938 r.), KKS (1936, 1939 r.), Organizacja Młodzieży Pracującej (OMP) w Kaliszu (1937 r.)⁸³. W indywidualnych mistrzostwach zwyciężyli: w 1937 r. – L. Bujnicki (OMP.), w 1938 r. – C. Zimny (ZPMP Orłę), w 1939 r. – T. Konakiewicz (ZPMP Orłę)⁸⁴.

Poza rozgrywkami o mistrzostwo Kalisza, rozgrywano w Kaliszu mecze międzyklubowe i międzymiastowe. Kalisz gościł zawodników z Ostrowa Wlkp., Warszawy i Łodzi⁸⁵.

Z powodów ekonomicznych mniejsze grono miłośników posiadał tenis ziemny. Zapoczątkowany w 1923 r. w TS Proсна w Kaliszu⁸⁶, rozwinął się w powołanym w 1927 r. Klubie Tenisowym w Kaliszu (KTK)⁸⁷. Miejscem treningów i zawodów były korty tenisowe w Nowym Parku⁸⁸. Od 1923 r. rozgrywano na nich mistrzostwa Kalisza. Pierwszymi mistrzami Kalisza zostali Henryk Mamroth (gra pojedyncza) oraz H. Mamroth i Henryk Wróblewski (gra deblowa)⁸⁹. Mistrzostw nie rozgrywano regularnie. W 1927 r. w grze pojedynczej zwyciężył Jerzy Kiernożycki, w podwójnej bracia L. i M. Schreier⁹⁰. W latach 1933–1934 tytuły mistrzowskie zdobywali Wiśniowska i Zenon Skórzewski⁹¹, w 1935 r.: w grze singlowej zwyciężyli Gadomski i Głębska, w grze deblowej para Dreszer – Szrajner, natomiast w mieszanej J. Przewłocki – A. Wyganowska⁹².

Klub Tenisowy w Kaliszu był organizatorem meczów międzyklubowych, najczęściej z tenisistami z Ostrowa, Koła i Łodzi. Większość meczów kończyło się porażką reprezentacji KTK, najdotkliwszą była przegrana z ŁKS (1 : 5) w 1934 r.⁹³

Sport pływakowski w Kaliszu był opóźniony w stosunku do innych regionów w Polsce. Głównym powodem był brak basenu pływackiego. Rozpoczętej w 1937 r.

⁸¹ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1929, nr 19, s. 3; 1929, nr 38, s. 3; 1929, nr 336, s. 3.

⁸² „Gazeta Kaliska” 1929, nr 336, s. 3; 1930, nr 67, s. 3; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1934, nr 38, s. 6; 1934, nr 79, s. 6.

⁸³ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1935, nr 60, s. 6; 1936, nr 77, s. 6; 1937, nr 75, s. 6; 1937, nr 86, s. 6; „Gazeta Kaliska” 1939, nr 59, s. 10.

⁸⁴ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1937, nr 86, s. 6; 1938, nr 76, s. 6; „ABC Kaliskie” 1939, nr 52, s. 1.

⁸⁵ „Makabi” 1913–1938..., s. 14; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1935, nr 29, s. 8; 1935, nr 85, s. 7; 1936, nr 6, s. 6; 1936, nr 8, s. 6.

⁸⁶ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1923, nr 128, s. 3.

⁸⁷ Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi (APŁ), Urząd Wojewódzki Łódzki 1918–1939, Organizacje i stowarzyszenia 1918–1939, sygn. 394, Klub Tenisowy w Kaliszu, b.p.

⁸⁸ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1923, nr 128, s. 3.

⁸⁹ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1923, nr 197, s. 3; 1923, nr 198, s. 3; 1923, nr 202, s. 4.

⁹⁰ Z. Życki, *60 lat K.S. „Proсна” Kalisz*, Kalisz 1982, s. 3; „Gazeta Kaliska” 1927, nr 254, s. 3.

⁹¹ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1933, nr 245, s. 3; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1934, nr 255, s. 6.

⁹² „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1935, nr 268, s. 4; 1935, nr 273, s. 4.

⁹³ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1930, nr 206, s. 3; 1929, nr 207, s. 3; 1930, nr 212, s. 3; 1934, nr 220, s. 8; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1934, nr 213, s. 6.

budowy nie ukończono do wybuchu wojny⁹⁴. Rywalizację sportową umożliwiwały pływalnie na rzece Prośnie za przystanią ŻTGS Makabi i Przystanią Wioślarską Młodzieży Szkolnej.

Pierwsze sekcje pływackie powołano w środowisku młodzieży gimnazjalnej (1930–1931)⁹⁵ oraz ŻTGS Makabi (1932 r.)⁹⁶. Pomimo braku sekcji pływackiej, w zawodach pływackich uczestniczyli członkowie innych kaliskich klubów, m.in. w 1936 r. w zawodach z okazji Święta Morza rywalizowali pływacy z RKS, ŻTGS Makabi, TW w Kaliszu, Szkoły Rzemieślniczo-Przemysłowej (SRP), PKS oraz MKS⁹⁷. Mistrzostwa miasta Kalisza w pływaniu zainaugurowano w 1937 r. na pływalni ŻTGS Makabi w Kaliszu. Zawody zdominowali gospodarze – zwyciężyli w 15 z 17 konkurencji⁹⁸. Podobnie jak w innych dyscyplinach, tak i w sporcie pływackim istniał konflikt na tle etnicznym⁹⁹, m.in. prasa kaliska nie podawała nazwisk żydowskich pływaków. W 1938 r. mistrzostwa Kalisza w pływaniu rozegrano w 17 konkurencjach w 4 kategoriach wiekowych¹⁰⁰. Tytuły mistrzowskie zdobyli: 100 m stylem klasycznym – W. Zawadzki (ZPMP Orle), 100 m stylem dowolnym – J. Klusiński (WKS Proсна), 200, 400 m stylem dowolnym oraz sztafeta 3 × 100 m – pływacy z Makabi. W kategorii chłopców, dziewcząt i kobiet oraz w sztafetach wystartowali tylko reprezentanci ŻTGS Makabi¹⁰¹.

Przez wiele lat kajakarstwo pozostawało głównie formą rekreacji. Powołanie w 1937 r. sekcji kajakowej przy WKS Proсна¹⁰² dało impuls do rozwoju sportu kajakowego. Sekcja kajakowa Proсна była wiodącą w Kaliszu¹⁰³ oraz jedyną zrzeszoną w Polskim Związku Kajakowców (PZKaj). Po rocznej działalności lokowała się na trzecim miejscu w okręgu poznańskim (15 klubów) oraz na dwunastym w klasyfikacji PZKaj (52 klubów)¹⁰⁴.

Działalność sportową zainaugurowały regaty w Kaliszu w 1937 r. z okazji Święta Morza z udziałem klubów z Poznania, Torunia i Kalisza oraz start w Pierw-

⁹⁴ APK, AmK, sygn. 259, Projekt basenu kąpielowego w Miejskim Parku Sportowym w Kaliszu [z pozwoleniem na budowę], k. brak paginacji, Pozwolenie, Plan sytuacyjny; „Sport Wodny” 1937, nr 16, s. 254; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1939, nr 195, s. 4.

⁹⁵ „Świt”, styczeń 1930, nr 5; maj 1930, nr 8; luty 1931, nr 5, s. 8; „Sztubank”, luty 1931, s. 22.

⁹⁶ „Makabi” 1913–1938..., s. 13.

⁹⁷ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1936, nr 177, s. 6. Wśród kobiet zwyciężyły: w stylu dowolnym na 50 i 100 m – D. Szczepaniakówna z TW w Kaliszu, w stylu klasycznym na 50 m – I. Garbowska (SRP). W kategorii mężczyzn najszybszymi byli: w stylu dowolnym na 100 m – J. Baum (ŻTGS Makabi), na 400 m – S. Właźlak (RKS), w stylu klasycznym na dystansie 100 m. – E. Ugorny (PKS). W wyścigu sztafetowym 3 × 100 m. zwyciężyli pływacy z RKS.

⁹⁸ „Makabi” 1913–1938..., s. 14.

⁹⁹ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1937, nr 239, s. 4; „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 225, s. 1.

¹⁰⁰ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1938, nr 230, s. 3; „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 233, s. 1.

¹⁰¹ „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 237, s. 1; 1938, nr 238, s. 1; „Gazeta Kaliska” 1938, nr 237, s. 8.

¹⁰² „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1937, nr 96, s. 6; 1937, nr 111, s. 6.

¹⁰³ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1937, nr 100, s. 8; 1937, nr 129, s. 6.

¹⁰⁴ „Sport Wodny” 1938, nr 2, s. 28; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1937, nr 358, s. 6.

szych Jesiennych Regatach Kajakowych w Poznaniu¹⁰⁵. Od 1937 r. rozgrywano mistrzostwa kajakowe Kalisza z udziałem zamiejscowych drużyn: Harcerskiej Drużyny Wilków Morskich z Poznania, Klubu Kajakowego 28 z Poznania, Rogozińskiego Klubu Kajakowego. Mistrzostwa zakończyły się sukcesem gospodarzy. W latach 1938 i 1939 walka o mistrzostwo Kalisza była wewnętrzną rozgrywką pomiędzy kajakarzami z WKS Proсна¹⁰⁶.

W 1939 r. po raz pierwszy podczas regat kajakarzy przeprowadzono w Kaliszu bieg żeglarski z udziałem żeglarzy WKS Proсна¹⁰⁷. Wcześniej areną rywalizacji kaliskich żeglarzy było jezioro Kierskie (k. Poznań). W 1937 r. zorganizowano na nim pierwsze żeglarskie mistrzostwa Kalisza z udziałem Harcerskiej Drużyny Żeglarskiej Młode Wilki z Poznania, Towarzystwa Miłośników Sportów Wodnych oraz WKS Proсна. W mistrzostwach zwyciężyli żeglarze z WKS Proсна. Dzień później wywalczyli Mistrzostwo Okręgu Poznańskiego¹⁰⁸.

Posiadające utylitarny charakter sporty jeździecki, szermierczy i strzelecki rozwijane były głównie w środowisku wojskowym oraz policji. Propagatorem sportu jeździeckiego był 25 pułk artylerii polowej (pap)¹⁰⁹. Programy Świąt Pułku¹¹⁰ przewidywały konkursy jeździeckie: hipiczny I i II stopnia, pocieszenia myśliwski, hipiczny podoficerski, bieg myśliwski za mastrem, woltyżerkę i pokazy wyszkolenia¹¹¹. Jeźdźcy z Kalisza uczestniczyli w zawodach zamiejscowych. W 1924 r. kpt. Talarczyk (25 pap) oraz kpt. Zakrzewski z 29 pułku Strzelców Kaniowskich (pSK) wzięli udział w Rajdzie z Warszawy do Poznania (450 km). Wyścig ukończyło 3 jeźdźców, nie było wśród nich kaliszan¹¹².

W 1935 r. Wielkopolski Klub Jazdy Konnej z Poznania zorganizował w Kaliszu zawody pn. Meeting Popularny. Ich celem było propagowanie sportu jeździeckiego w regionie kaliskim. Cel propagandowy osiągnięto. Podjęta w 1936 r. próba powołania klubu jeździeckiego w Kaliszu nie zakończyła się sukcesem¹¹³.

Sport szermierczy w Kaliszu zainicjowała w 1923 r. sekcja szermiercza TS Proсна. Nie rozwinęła ona działalności sportowej, a kłopoty finansowe wymusiły likwidację (1928 r.)¹¹⁴. Głównym miejscem kultywowania szermierki było środo-

¹⁰⁵ „Sport Wodny” 1937, nr 18, s. 284; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1937, nr 174, s. 6.

¹⁰⁶ „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 128, s. 1; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1937, nr 274, s. 5; 1939, nr 168, s. 6.

¹⁰⁷ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1939, nr 178, s. 6.

¹⁰⁸ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1937, nr 283, s. 6

¹⁰⁹ W. Jarno, *Życie codzienne w garnizonie kaliskim w latach 1921–1939*, „Acta Universitatis Lodziensis, Folia Historica” 2018, t. 102, s. 118.

¹¹⁰ B. Kustosik, *25 Pułk Artylerii Lekkiej Ziemi Kaliskiej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Ajaks, Pruszków 2009, s. 19.

¹¹¹ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1932, nr 143, s. 3.

¹¹² „Przegląd Kawaleryjski” 1924, nr 3, s. 53, „Jeździec i Hodowca” 1924, nr 41–42, s. 332; „Stadion” 1924, nr 42, s. 12.

¹¹³ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1936, nr 44, s. 6; 1936, nr 105, s. 6.

¹¹⁴ Z. Życki, *60 lat K.S....*, s. 2.

wisko wojskowe. W mistrzostwach garnizonu Kalisz-Szczypiorno tytuły mistrzowskie wywalczył w 1937 i 1938 r. ppor. Mieczysław Trojanowski¹¹⁵, a w 1939 r. ppor. Tadeusz Słaby (w szabli) i por. Tadeusz Sznajder (w szpadzie)¹¹⁶. Najlepsi szermierze walczyli w mistrzostwach Dowództwa Okręgu Korpusu VII. W 1939 r. Mistrzem Okręgu VII w szabli i szpadzie w klasie II oficerskiej został ppor. Tadeusz Rukściński, w klasie fecht mistrzów pierwsze miejsce w szabli wywalczył plut. Władysław Kluge¹¹⁷.

Podwaliny pod rozwój sportu strzeleckiego w Kaliszu dały zajęcia strzeleckie będące częścią wyszkolenia wojskowego, policyjnego oraz militarne w organizacjach paramilitarnych. Od 1921 r. mandat ambasadora sportu strzeleckiego posiadał Związek Strzelecki (ZS). Zrzeszony w Międzynarodowym Związku Strzeleckim i Związku Polskich Związków Sportowych reprezentował polski sport strzelecki w granicach kraju i poza nimi. Od 1925 r. sport strzelecki w Kaliszu wspomagało reaktywowane bractwo kurkowe w Kaliszu¹¹⁸. Komenda Główna ZS i Zarząd Okręgu VII Polskiego Związku Strzelectwa Sportowego (PZSS) powołały oddziały powiatowe PZSS. Okręg Kalisz PZSS utworzono w 1934 r.¹¹⁹, w 1936 r. zrzeszał on 28 sekcji, w tym 24 w Kaliszu¹²⁰. W kolejnych latach liczba sekcji strzeleckich w Kaliszu uległa redukcji do 9–10¹²¹. Powołanie Okręgu Kalisz PZSS usystematyzowało rywalizację sportową. W latach 1933–1938 organizowano mistrzostwa Kalisza. Ich program ulegał ewolucji – obok strzelania z broni małokalibrowej i wojskowej (różne pozycje), wprowadzono strzelanie z pistoletu i łuku. Główny ton rywalizacji nadawali zawodnicy WKS Proсна i PKS, wśród pań strzelczynie z ZS i WKS Proсна. Indywidualnie najwyższy poziom demonstrowali: M. Ficówna (ZS), W. Olejnikowa (WKS Proсна), A. Światowcowa (WKS Proсна), Cz. Jewasiński (WKS Proсна), J. Ferdynus (PKS), M. Basiński (PKS), J. Grzegorek (PKS), H. Dymalski (Kaliska Ochotnicza Straż Pożarna). W konkurencji strzelania z łuku – Bentkowska¹²². Najlepsi zawodnicy uzyskiwali prawo startu w mistrzo-

¹¹⁵ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1937, nr 22, s. 6; 1938, nr 32, s. 5.

¹¹⁶ „ABC Kaliskie” 1939, nr 40, s. 1; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1939, nr 47, s. 6.

¹¹⁷ B. Kustosik, *25 Pułk Artylerii Lekkiej...*, s. 13; „ABC Kaliskie” 1939, nr 80, s. 1

¹¹⁸ K. Grzesiak, *Zarys historii strzelectwa sportowego w Kaliszu*, Wrocław 1998, s. 11.

¹¹⁹ APK, SPK 1918–1939, sygn. 150, Polski Związek Strzelectwa Sportowego – Oddział w Kaliszu (1934–1938), k. 2, Związek Strzelecki, Komenda Okręgu VII; Sprawozdanie z działalności Okręgu Poznańskiego Polskiego Związku Strzelectwa Sportowego za rok 1936, Poznań 1937, s. 35–36; k. 15, Pismo L. dz. 25/35 do Starostwa Powiatowego w Kaliszu z dnia 13.II.1935 r.

¹²⁰ *Sprawozdanie z działalności Okręgu Poznańskiego Polskiego Związku Strzelectwa Sportowego za rok 1936*, Poznań 1937, s. 11.

¹²¹ APK, SPK 1918–1939, sygn. 150, Polski Związek Strzelectwa Sportowego – Oddział w Kaliszu k. 17. Odpowiedź na pismo L BP. 8.526/38; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1938, nr 23, s. 5; 1939, nr 9, s. 6.

¹²² „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1934, nr 266, s. 6; 1934, nr 274, s. 6; 1934, nr 275, s. 8, 1934, nr 282, s. 6; 1935, nr 129, s. 6; 1935, nr 144, s. 6; 1935, nr 269, s. 6; 1936, nr 161, s. 8; 1937,

stwach Okręgu VII PZSS. Prym w nich wiedli zawodnicy z powiatu poznańskiego. Z Kalisza tytuły mistrzów okręgu poznańskiego wywalczyli: w 1935 r. – M. Ficówna z ZS (dwukrotnie), A. Światowcowa (WKS Proсна) i J. Ferdynus(PKS)¹²³, w 1936 r. – kpt. Cz. Jewasiński (WKS Proсна)¹²⁴.

Poza mistrzostwami PZSS żołnierze, policjanci oraz poszczególne grupy zawodowe organizowały zawody rangi mistrzowskiej, np. w mistrzostwach urzędników państwowych w 1938 r. najlepsza okazała się drużyna z Gimnazjum Państwowego im. A. Asnyka¹²⁵. W mistrzostwach 25 Dywizji Piechoty dominowali strzelcy z 29 pSK¹²⁶, w 1923 r. zdobyli II miejsce w mistrzostwach armii we Lwowie¹²⁷. Kaliscy policjanci należeli do czołowych strzelców w okręgu II (łódzki). W 1929 r. reprezentowali okręg II PP w IV Ogólnokrajowych Zawodach Sportowych PP w Katowicach¹²⁸.

Podsumowanie

Odzyskanie przez Polskę niepodległości stworzyło dogodne warunki dla reaktywacji działających w czasach zaborów klubów sportowych oraz powstawania nowych. Pierwszym było Kaliskie Towarzystwo Wioślarskie, które jeszcze przed odzyskaniem niepodległości przez Polskę, w sierpniu 1918 r. wznowiło działalność sportową. W latach 1918–1939 w Kaliszu funkcjonowało kilkadziesiąt klubów i stowarzyszeń sportowych, zrzeszających ludność polską oraz mniejszości narodowe (żydowską, ukraińską i rosyjską). Początkowo ruch sportowy rozwijał się spontanicznie, głównie pod wpływem czynnika społecznego. Po 1927 r. powołanie komitetu oraz komendy wychowania fizycznego i przysposobienia wojskowego podporządkowało sport władzy państwowej i środowisku wojskowemu. Strukturę organizacyjną kaliskiego sportu w okresie międzywojennym uzupełniały podokręgi przy okręgowych związkach sportowych w piłę nożnej, lekkiej atletyce, kolarstwie i strzelectwie. Utrudnieniem w rozwoju ruchu sportowego był brak kadry szkoleniowej. Organizowane kursy instruktorskie nie rozwiązywały problemu. Główny trud szkolenia sportowego spoczywał na przewodnikach sportu oraz najbardziej doświadczonych zawodnikach. Utrudnieniem

nr 95, s. 6; 1937, nr 134, s. 6; 1937, nr 143, s. 6; 1937, nr 156, s. 6; 1938, nr 125, s. 5; „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 135, s. 1.

¹²³ „Łącznik Strzelecki” 1935, nr 5, s. 16; „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1935, nr 160, s. 6.

¹²⁴ *Sprawozdanie z działalności Okręgu Poznańskiego...*, s. 15.

¹²⁵ „ABC Kaliskie” 1938, nr 161, s. 1. W składzie: prof. Baworowski, prof. Karolak i prof. Wojciechowski.

¹²⁶ „Echo Kaliskie Ilustrowane” 1933, nr 276, s. 6.

¹²⁷ „Gazeta Kaliska” 1927, nr 118, s. 2–3.

¹²⁸ APŁ, Komenda Wojewódzka Policji Państwowej w Łodzi, sygn. 11, k. 106, Rozkaz Nr 110, 1. Wojewódzkie Zawody Eliminacyjne; „Kurier Łódzki” 1929, nr 212, s. 7.

w rozwoju sportu był brak sal gimnastycznych, boisk, strzelnic i pływalni. Bogatsze kluby posiadały własne przystanie, boiska i strzelnice, pozostałe korzystały z obiektów sportowych Miejskiego Komitetu WFIPW, 29 pułku Strzelców Kaniowskich oraz zaprzyjaźnionych klubów sportowych. Sytuację poprawiło wybudowanie w 1927 r. Stadionu Miejskiego w Kaliszu, który w latach 1927–1939 stał się miejscem rozgrywania najważniejszych zawodów sportowych.

Kryzys gospodarczy lat 30. XX wieku był przyczyną likwidacji sekcji i klubów sportowych. Próbą wyjścia z sytuacji było łączenie klubów sportowych (WKS Proсна Kalisz) lub przechodzenie klubów pod mecenat kaliskich fabrykantów (KKS Bielarnia).

Najpopularniejszymi dyscyplinami sportowymi w Kaliszu w latach 1918–1939 były piłka nożna, kolarstwo i wioślarstwo. Mecze piłkarskie w klasie A ŁOZPN TS Proсна i KKS oraz międzyklubowe (KS Hakoah Wiedeń) budziły zainteresowanie wielotysięcznej publiczności. Przy podobnej frekwencji odbywały się wyścigi kolarskie z udziałem Jerzego Koszutskiego (reprezentanta Polski na Igrzyskach IX Olimpiady w Amsterdamie, 1928 r.) i Z. Sobolewskiego oraz czółowych polskich kolarzy. Tłumy widzów ściągały nad brzeg rzeki Proсны podczas regat wioślarskich z udziałem KTW, PKS oraz WKS Proсна. Największym sukcesem wioślarstwa kaliskiego była pierwsza lokata w tabeli punktacyjnej PZTW w 1934 r. wywalczona przez KTW. Umożliwiło to powołanie czwórki wioślarzy z KTW do drużyny olimpijskiej. Jej zdekompletowanie w 1935 r. uniemożliwiło start kaliszan w Igrzyskach XI Olimpiady w Berlinie (1936 r.). Dużą popularnością wśród mieszkańców Kalisza cieszyły się międzymiastowe mecze lekkoatletyczne z reprezentacjami Poznania, Krotoszyna, Ostrowa, Sieradza i Pabianic. Wśród lekkoatletów najwyższy poziom sportowy demonstrowali M. Ficówna, Z. Smętkówna, W. Wysocka, J. Tęsiorowski, S. Żeśko, F. Przytuła. Emocje wśród kaliszan wzbudzały pojedynki bokserskie podczas meczów międzymiastowych oraz mistrzostw Kalisza. Na kaliskim ringu karierę pięściarską rozpoczęli W. Pietrzak, S. Szrajer i J. Anczykowski. W latach 30. XX w. swoich miłośników w Kaliszu miały rozgrywki siatkówki, koszykówki i szczypiorniaka. Najwyższy poziom sportowy reprezentowały drużyny KKS Bielarnia (kobiety) oraz PKS, ZPMP Orłę i WKS Proсна (mężczyźni). Zapoczątkowany wśród mniejszości żydowskiej tenis stołowy rozwijany był w środowisku młodzieży gimnazjalnej i robotniczej. Sport szermierczy, jeździecki i strzelectwo, z powodów utylitarnych, kultywowane był przede wszystkim w środowisku wojskowym, policyjnym i organizacji paramilitarnych. Pod koniec omawianego okresu zapoczątkowano w Kaliszu rywalizację sportową w pływaniu, kajakarstwie i żeglarstwie.

DEKLARACJA BRAKU KONFLIKTU INTERESÓW

Autor deklaruje brak potencjalnych konfliktów interesów w odniesieniu do badań, autorstwa i/lub publikacji artykułu *Sport w Kaliszu w latach 1918–1939. Zarys problematyki*.

FINANSOWANIE

Autor nie otrzymał żadnego wsparcia finansowego w zakresie badań, autorstwa i/lub publikacji artykułu *Sport w Kaliszu w latach 1918–1939. Zarys problematyki*.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/sit.2023.04.04>

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Sport in Literature: Sports Passion in the Literary Output of Krzysztof Zuchora on the Example of Selected Poems

How to cite [jak cytować]: Mazurkiewicz M., *Sport in Literature: Sports Passion in the Literary Output of Krzysztof Zuchora on the Example of Selected Poems*, "Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe" 2023, t. 6, nr 4, pp. 73–90.

Sport w literaturze – pasja sportowa w twórczości Krzysztofa Zuchory na przykładzie wybranych wierszy

Streszczenie

Sport stanowi źródło inspiracji artystycznej od czasów starożytnych – już w antycznej Grecji opiewano z pasją ówczesnych bohaterów aren sportowych. Dotyczy to również literatury, gdzie częstokroć ukazuje się dramaturgię sportowej rywalizacji i gdzie opisywane są różnego rodzaju silne emocje będące jej efektem; niejednokrotnie pojawia się także nostalgia za minionymi czasami, za ważnymi wydarzeniami sportowymi, które się nieustannie wspomina. Niniejszy artykuł zawiera analizę obecności sportu w poezji (na przykładzie dyscyplin sportowych oraz wybitnych postaci) w oparciu o twórczość współczesnego polskiego autora Krzysztofa Zuchory (ur. w 1940 roku). Przeprowadzone badanie wymagało zapoznania się z licznymi monografiami oraz innymi publikacjami (artykuły naukowe, popularnonaukowe i rozdziały w monografiach), zarówno w języku angielskim, jak i polskim, przedstawiającymi szeroko rozumiane związki sportu z literaturą; podstawowy materiał źródłowy stanowią jednak przede wszystkim wybrane utwory poetyckie

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wspomnianego powyżej znakomitego autora. Co istotne, interpretacja kilku charakterystycznych wierszy o tematyce sportowej autorstwa Krzysztofa Zuchory powiązana została z analizą źródeł historycznych. Badanie niezaprzeczalnie wykazało, iż dzieła literackie stanowią ważną kronikę wydarzeń historycznych, sport zaś – potężne źródło inspiracji *par excellence* – posiada ogromny potencjał w zakresie kształtowania ludzkich postaw, jak również budowania lepszego pod wieloma względami świata.

Słowa kluczowe: sport, literatura, poezja, historia, bohater.

Abstract

Sport has been a source of artistic inspiration since antiquity, e.g. in ancient Greece the sporting heroes of that time were passionately sung about. This is also true of literature, which often depicts the drama of sporting rivalry and describes the resulting strong emotions; not once does it evoke nostalgia for times gone by, for important sporting events that are constantly recalled. This article analyzes the presence of sport (using the example of sports disciplines and prominent figures) in poetry through the works of a contemporary Polish author, Krzysztof Zuchora (born in 1940). The research carried out required familiarization with numerous monographs and other publications (academic articles, popular science articles and chapters in monographs), both in English and Polish, in which the broadly understood relationship between sport and literature is presented; the primary source material, however, consists mainly of selected poetic works by the above-mentioned outstanding author. Importantly, the interpretation of several characteristic sports poems by Krzysztof Zuchora was combined with the analysis of historical sources. The study has undeniably shown that literary works are an important chronicle of historical events, while sport – as a powerful source of inspiration *par excellence* – has great potential for shaping human attitudes and building a better world in many respects.

Keywords: sport, literature, poetry, history, hero.

Sports Literature – Introduction

It is no exaggeration to say that “it is impossible to fully understand contemporary society and culture without acknowledging the importance of sport.”¹ There is hardly an institution or community that sport does not influence in one way or another. It is one of the most fascinating social and cultural phenomena and it can be easily noticed that sporting inspirations permeate different areas of life. Harry Edwards, an American sociologist, rightly states: “In the humanities and arts, one finds manifestations of considerable interest in athletics. Literature, painting, sculpture, philosophy, and even ballet have all attempted to capture and interpret athletics in terms of their respective mediums.”² Given the fact that sporting rivalry has always been ascribed numerous symbolic meanings, there have been many writers attached to or even fascinated with sport.

¹ G. Jarvie, with J. Thornton and H. Mackie, *Sport, Culture and Society. An Introduction*, Routledge, Abingdon, New York 2018, p. 28.

² H. Edwards, *Sociology of Sport*, Dorsey Press, Homewood, IL, 1973, p. 7.

The drama of the agon inspires a great number of representatives of the literary world who explore the turbulence of life, from challenges and disappointments to great joys. Some of them, like Edgar Allan Poe, Lord Byron or Kazimierz Wierzyński, were also athletes par excellence.³

Sports literature, as defined by Wojciech Lipoński, is “a variety of literature in whose works sport determines their artistic or social function, most often both together.”⁴ Sport has clearly marked its presence in literary creations of various epochs. This is true of every kind of literature, whether it is novels, short stories or works of poetry, drama and non-fiction. Importantly, literature has a tendency to romanticize and celebrate the virtues and excitement of sport, as well as the dedication, discipline and teamwork, often associated with athletic endeavour. Sport is therefore idealized in numerous literary works. On the other hand, some authors (Bernard Malamud, Don DeLillo, William Carlos Williams, Nick Hornby and others) explore the darker aspects of the sporting reality, such as corruption, cheating, an obsessive nature of fandom and the toll that intense competition takes on individuals.

According to the famous definition of the founder and central figure of English Romanticism, William Wordsworth, poetry is “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.”⁵ Given that sport in its various forms is one of the main purveyors of feelings and emotions, the existence of poems on the theme of sport seems entirely justified, even obvious. A particularly interesting phenomenon is sports poetry which exalts sport, emphasizes its beauty and highlights the humanistic values of physical culture, describing almost mystical experiences of the observer/fan or the athlete, the drama of the agon that pervades people’s memories, as well as glorifying champions. All this can be found in the works of Kazimierz Wierzyński. The literary output of another Pole, Krzysztof Zuchora, is also noteworthy in this context.

Greek poetry begins with the great epic poems of Homer, i.e. the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (8th century BC), in which large sections are devoted to various types of competitions (agon) of the pre-Olympic era. In these works, one comes across interesting descriptions of athletic contests that took place in disciplines such as running, boxing, discus throwing or chariot racing. In the following centuries, the appeal and importance of sport were appreciated by numerous men of letters. Let us recall some selected poets who willingly addressed sports themes in their

³ See for example: M. Mazurkiewicz, *Sport w literaturze i kulturze. Konteksty historyczne i współczesne* [*Sport in Literature and Culture: Historical and Contemporary Contexts*], Wyd. Uniwersytetu Jana Kochanowskiego, Kielce 2020.

⁴ W. Lipoński, *Humanistyczna Encyklopedia Sportu* [*The Humanistic Encyclopedia of Sport*], Sport i Turystyka, Warszawa 1987, p. 174.

⁵ R.L. Brett, A.R. Jones (eds.), *Wordsworth & Coleridge. Lyrical Ballads; the Text of the 1798 Edition with the Additional 1800 Poems and Prefaces*, Routledge, London and New York 2005, p. 237.

works: Henri de Montherlant from France, Bertolt Brecht from Germany, the American Ernest Thayer, the Greek Takis Doxas, the Romanian Tudor George, the Chinese, like Lin Mang or representatives of Italian poetry – Raniero Nicolai, Ermanno Eandi and Enrico Mario Lazzarin among others.⁶

Sports poetry has a long tradition in Poland as well. The most famous representative of this genre of Polish literature is undoubtedly the aforementioned Kazimierz Wierzyński. The breakthrough in the life and literary work of Wierzyński was the famous book of poems, which (in the German translation) was awarded the gold medal in the literary competition during the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam – *Olympic Laurel* (1927).⁷ It is a remarkably apt compilation of the major sporting events of the period 1925–27, singing the praises of the pre-war sports champions: Finnish long-distance runner Paavo Nurmi, Spanish soccer goalkeeper Ricardo Zamora, American sprinter Charles Paddock, and others (the presence of history in sports poetry will be soon discussed through the work of Zuchora). As Michał Sprusiński, poet and literary critic, emphasizes, “being enchanted by youth, physical beauty, and the harmony of action has here acquired a new symbolism.”⁸ The volume, which was highly appreciated by the international audience, brought Wierzyński popularity all over the world. His poems were translated into the most important European languages. In the following decades, many Polish poets tried to equal him – Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, Roman Sadowski, Aleksander Rymkiewicz, and, last but not least, Krzysztof Zuchora, whose poetic output will be the focus of this article.

State of the Art, Source Material and Methodology

The relationship between sport and literature is of interest to numerous researchers who establish their own academic associations, such as the (American) Sport Literature Association, founded in 1983, which organizes annual conferences and publishes its journal *Aethlon: The Journal of Sport Literature*. The activity of sports and literature-loving scholars has resulted in a growing number of publications devoted to this topic; many of them came out in recent decades, such as (containing interesting “case studies”) *Sport, Literature, Society*, published in 2014 by Routledge (editors: Tadié, Mangan, Chaudhuri).⁹ In Poland, publications

⁶ W. Lipoński, *Historia sportu [The History of Sport]*, PWN, Warszawa 2012, p. 584.

⁷ K. Wierzyński, *Laur olimpijski [Olympic Laurel]*, Heliodor, Warszawa 2008 [orig. 1927].

⁸ M. Sprusiński, “Anioł śmiechu, lutnista ciemnego czasu. Introduction” [“The Angel of Laughter, the Lutenist of a Dark Time. Introduction”], [in:] M. Sprusiński (selection), *Wierzyński. Wiersze wybrane [Wierzyński. Selected Poems]*, PIW, Warszawa 1979, p. 10.

⁹ A. Tadié, J.A. Mangan, & S. Chaudhuri (eds.), *Sport, Literature, Society*, Routledge, London and New York 2014.

by, for example, Lipoński or Mazurkiewicz have explored multiple links between sport and literature.¹⁰ There are also some scattered articles by other authors touching on selected aspects of those connections, but such works are very few.¹¹

The history of the relationship between poetry and sport is long, though not necessarily sufficiently explored. There are some interesting anthologies, mostly involving English-speaking countries. An example is *Motion: American Sports Poems*,¹² which presents a wide selection of contemporary American poets like William Heyen. In addition, there are anthologies that focus on one sport, such as *100 Scottish Football Poems*.¹³ There are also publications which analyze the specificity of the phenomenon of sports poetry, such as *The Sporting Muse: A Critical Study of Poetry about Athletes and Athletics* (2004), written by Don Johnson.¹⁴ Overall, however, there is a large gap in research in this area.

This article is a case study in which an outstanding Polish poet is presented and analyzed. Research methods included the explorations of primary sources (literary texts) in conjunction with the study of historical sources where sports play an important role, as well as the review of numerous monographs and articles on cultural-historical topics (with an emphasis on sports literature). The poems by Zuchora were selected on the basis of the most characteristic features of the author's work and the importance of the subjects discussed, with the theme of sports heroes an exemplar.

Krzysztof Zuchora and his Literary Output – the Beauty of Sport

Krzysztof Zuchora, born on January 10, 1940, in Głowno (near Łódź), is a Polish poet, academic and lecturer on physical culture, former editor-in-chief of *Physical Culture* journal, and a great advocate of sports values and the Olympic idea. His literary output has two facets. On the one hand, these are monographs and articles dealing with various aspects of physical culture and, on the other hand, poems which are highly inspired by sports, but also by nature. Sport is seen by Zuchora as a broad cultural phenomenon that has great potential to lead to beautiful things. His first volume of poetry, *Jasnowłosej (To the Fair-*

¹⁰ W. Lipoński, *Zapomniani piewcy sportu [The Forgotten Eulogists of Sport]*, Sport i Turystyka, Warszawa 1970; M. Mazurkiewicz, *Sport w literaturze i kulturze...*

¹¹ See, for example: T. Sahaj, *Kibicowskie narracje w utworach polskich prozaików: Wojciech Kuczok i Jerzy Pilch [Fan Narratives in the Works of Polish Prose Writers: Wojciech Kuczok and Jerzy Pilch]*, [in:] Z. Dziubiński, M. Lenartowicz (eds.), *Kultura fizyczna a kultura masowa [Physical Culture and Mass Culture]*, AWF w Warszawie, SALOS RP, Warszawa 2011, p. 175–184.

¹² N. Blaustein (ed.), *Motion: American Sports Poems*, University of Iowa Press, Iowa City 2001.

¹³ A. Findlay, *100 Favourite Scottish Football Poems*, Luath Press, Edinburgh 2007.

¹⁴ D. Johnson, *The Sporting Muse: A Critical Study of Poetry about Athletes and Athletics*, McFarland Press, Jefferson, N.C., 2004.

-Haired One), was published in 1968, and his latest, *Łaskawość (Kindness)*, in 2017, with new individual poems continuing to appear in the public domain to this day. As writer and literary critic Marian Grzeźczak states, “The sense of concreteness facilitates describing sport, at which Krzysztof Zuchora is a true master. He trusts the word, but cautiously, because as a sports expert he knows that it is clearly a realm of energy, real and often measurable...”¹⁵

As for the creative process, the author describes it in one of the interviews as follows:

First, there is always the pressure of time, then a word extracted from silence and later an organizing thought appears, the flow of the poem. I believe that every writer’s activity should address the problems that trouble him most, fill the spaces he needs to fill. For me, the pitch is such a place where nature and culture, muscles and thoughts, sport and art come together naturally.¹⁶

The poet’s large-scale activity was noticed nationwide – he received the title of Honorary Citizen of Głowno, was awarded the Knight’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta for outstanding merits in his social activity aimed at developing and popularizing sport among young people, and then he was honoured with the Officer’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta. He received it from President Andrzej Duda for outstanding services to the Polish Olympic movement. Zuchora is also a recipient of the Gold (1996) and Silver (twice, 2004, 2012) Olympic Laurel, a special award of the Polish Olympic Committee, introduced in 1967 as a sign of recognition and respect for Polish artists (writers, painters, filmmakers, photographers or architects) who shape the humanistic values of sport and its image in society.¹⁷

The poems – translated by me and presented below – selected from the vast literary output of Zuchora constitute a representative sample of his perception of sport. The author places emphasis on different aspects of the sports reality, focusing on its noble facet. Therefore, there is sincere love expressed towards the special place with its own spirit – the stadium, which sports fans get accustomed to and which they usually treat with affection. Moreover, there is fascination with the figure and the Olympic idea of Pierre de Coubertin, the father of the modern Olympic movement. Last but not least, there is visible appreciation of sports heroes, who are an integral part of the history of sport and history in general, such as the American legless marathon runner Bob Wieland, Polish legendary

¹⁵ M. Grzeźczak, *Review excerpt on book cover*, [in:] K. Zuchora, *W zatoce serca [In the Bay of the Heart]*, Heliodor, Warszawa 2000.

¹⁶ J. Ślawska-Szalewicz, “Krzysztof Zuchora poeta, eseista, pedagog” [“Krzysztof Zuchora Poet, Essayist, Pedagogue”] (blog post), *Okiem Jadwigi*, October 28, 2012. Accessed on: <https://www.okiemjadwigi.pl/krzysztof-zuchora-poeta-eseista-pedagog/> [Access: November 20, 2021].

¹⁷ “Wawrzyn Olimpijski” [“Olympic Laurel”], *Polski Komitet Olimpijski [Polish Olympic Committee]*. Accessed on: <https://olimpijski.pl/pkol/projekty-i-konkursy/wawrzyn-olimpijski/> [Access: May 5, 2021].

sprinter Irena Szewińska or the unfearful alpinists taking part in the famous rescue action in 2018, aiming at saving their stranded colleagues on Nanga Parbat.

First of all, let us take a look at the poems dealing with the stadium – the place that is special for every sports fan. It evokes emotions and is usually remembered throughout one’s life. The place where the stadium is located, for example, the country where the World Cup matches, and, to a lesser extent, minor events are held, forms a ritual center of the world for the sports community.

Stadium

I know this place
 warm
 and tender
 like the hollow of one’s hand

 here the stone of a scream
 so suddenly gets stuck in silence
 like a discus in the tall
 grass of the air
 (1968)¹⁸

Thus, the stadium constitutes an extraordinary place, imbued with emotions, a kind of “sacred” space, with its own spirit. It is loved by devoted fans who feel attachment that is often connected with a sense of nostalgia. Overall, it can be analyzed from many perspectives. Lipoński defines the stadium in his *Humanistic Encyclopedia of Sport* as follows: “an architectural structure combining a sports competition area with an amphitheatrically located spectator area.”¹⁹ However, this technical description is not a full definition as it is devoid of emotions (both positive and negative), so much present and so strong.

The poem is definitely written by a sports lover. Sport would be clearly incomplete without the dedicated fans who immerse themselves in the games. Michał Lenartowicz and Jakub Mosz rightly state that “The aura of a football club is created by the fans, who become involved in the life of the club through actions that create identity.”²⁰ In other words, they are characterized by a strong sense of belonging, motivated by the need to identify with their chosen team. This identification is linked to an emotional involvement in the course of events on the pitch, but also in wider issues outside the stadium.²¹ The attachment of

¹⁸ K. Zuchora, *Jasnowłosej [To the Fair-Haired One]*, Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, Łódź 1968, p. 29. All translations – M.M.

¹⁹ W. Lipoński, *Humanistyczna encyklopedia...*, p. 341.

²⁰ M. Lenartowicz, J. Mosz, *Stadiony i widowiska. Społeczne przestrzenie sportu [Stadiums and Shows. The Social Spaces of Sport]*, SCHOLAR, Warszawa 2018, p. 135.

²¹ See, for example: M. Mazurkiewicz, ‘If God Be for Us, Who Can Be Against Us?’: Religion and Religiousness in Polish Football, 2008-2017, “The International Journal of the History of Sport” 2018, vol. 35, no. 1, Special Issue: *Sport and Christianity: Historical Perspectives*, p. 108–121.

fans to their stadium is usually very strong and enduring. American sports columnist Thomas Boswell believes that the most mysterious quality of stadiums is their almost magnetic attraction. It is the inexplicable that draws people to the stadium – sometimes, it seems, even against their will.²² Stadiums, like temples, are places that stand out in some way from their surroundings and are sanctified by tradition. They have their own calendar of events, with their own holy days. Although the stadium is physically separated from the rest of the world, it is not independent of it, just like the rest of the world is not independent of it. It is, therefore, a common good without which men – like the faithful without a temple – would be impoverished in a sense.

The community of the stadium (co-created by athletes, coaches, referees, and fans, who love their teams) helps shape the sports performance. For those in the stands who come together and fraternize for the duration of the sporting event, age differences and social barriers disappear as shown by the conversations between people who did not know each other before the game, the spontaneous shaking of hands or, especially in euphoric moments, even an embrace. This is how social bonds are formed between individuals who have almost nothing to do with each other outside the stadium. Memories of sporting spectacles and the stadium atmosphere awaken nostalgia, fans often confirm it themselves. Scholar John Sexton's habit of visiting Yankee Stadium (baseball) brings back, as he puts it, "connections to past games and championships, along with players who were larger than life [... and there] he finds a connection to something deeply meaningful."²³ During the Covid 19 pandemic time, lovers of sports were deprived of the opportunity to experience emotions due to the suspension of most games overnight. This allowed many fans to sincerely appreciate the importance of the stadium reality. Former Polish national football player Jerzy Gorgoń, for example, remarked: "Now, in the age of the pandemic, I notice more clearly what sport means in people's lives. I would like to watch the European Championships, the Champions League and later the Olympic Games, but it's impossible now, I miss them a lot. I cannot imagine my life without sport. It is a nightmare."²⁴ Indeed, despite the fact that contemporary stadiums are sometimes dangerous places where hooliganism thrives, a life without going to matches would be unbearable for a large number of people.

²² T. Boswell, *Why Time Begins On Opening Day*, Doubleday, New York 1984, p. 19.

²³ M. Hoven, J.J. Carney, and M.T. Engel, *On the 8th Day: A Catholic Theology of Sport*, Cascade Books, Eugene, Oregon, 2022, p. 111.

²⁴ L. Błażyński, *Gorgoń: Wolę futbol z moich czasów. Był ładniejszy dla oka, bardziej radosny*, [Gorgoń: I Prefer the Football of My Times. It was Nicer to the Eye, More Joyful] „Przegląd Sportowy”, April 21, 2020. Accessed on: <https://www.przegladsportowy.pl/pilka-nozna/pilka-nozna-jerzy-gorgon-o-zyciu-futbolu-czy-robercie-lewandowskim/c76c4wp> [Access: April 25, 2020].

One might conclude, therefore, that there is a certain inherent power of the stadium, the existence of which not everyone is aware of. Let us have a look at another example of a poem by Zuchora dedicated to this special place.

In the Sunny Crown of the Stadium

You, who are standing in the sunny crown of the stadium
 and holding the scepter of infallibility in your hand
 who carry me high up onto the mountain tops
 to show me in a while
 your indifference
 go down from the heights
 stand close by
 put your hand on your chest
 see how my heart keeps beating
 like crazy
 pounding within the four walls of darkness
 as if it wanted to scream out abruptly
 all of its brightness
 and to stand once
 in the vivid blaze of light

this race hasn't started yet
 the starting command hasn't been given yet
 this race will not last longer than necessary
 so that the feet could sing out two bars
 of Homeric hexameter

and your hand is shaking
 and the pupils of your eyes are growing enormous
 as if long ago
 it had been all over

(1995)²⁵

There is a call for someone who is observing the action in the stadium (God? A sports hero? A mysterious role model to follow?). There is also anticipation of the race, visible nervousness. Nevertheless, the scene is permeated with hope. We can see that the sporting ritual has been repeated since ancient times, anchoring sporting practices in tradition.

Sport obviously creates a space where people seek self-fulfillment. A fan's love for his or her beloved team, instilled at a young age and then developed over a long period of time, brings not only emotional elation but also the stability that comes from the consistency of the fan ritual. In spite of all the contemporary criticism, sport can also have a very positive impact on societies, which is expressed in the Olympic ideals. According to the International Olympic Com-

²⁵ K. Zuchora, *W słonecznej koronie stadionu* [In the Sunny Crown of the Stadium], Heliodor, Warszawa 1995, p. 13–14.

mittee, “The three values of Olympism are excellence, respect and friendship. They constitute the foundation on which the Olympic Movement builds its activities to promote sport, culture and education with a view to building a better world.”²⁶ The poem entitled *Olympism* shows this noble Olympic perspective, the author paying tribute to Pierre de Coubertin. This literary work best explains Zuchora’s attitude to great people, outstanding individuals with a vision.

Olympism

according to Pierre de Coubertin

the light and the air
 brighten the eyesight and widen the breath
 in it there is the first joy of a child
 who just starts to walk
 he already wants more
 he’s running, catching his balance with difficulty
 straight into the arms of love and beauty
 he raises his hands as a sign of victory
 reaching out for the sun
 but inside of him there is also suffering of a marathon runner
 who’s yearning to catch up with escaping life
 he’s running with a frail hope in his heart
 that behind the finish line he will find a shade of an olive tree
 and the light of myth which broadens the space
 (2001)²⁷

The direct reference to Pierre de Coubertin, French aristocrat and pedagogue,²⁸ is followed by a poem in which the Olympic sport is presented as something noble, arousing enthusiasm and a need for development, both physical and spiritual. Thus, sport as such broadens the horizons. And although suffering is an integral part of any rivalry, the hope of victory is demonstrated as a universal value. As Zuchora himself puts it in one of his articles, de Coubertin considered sports fields as “places dedicated to the cultivation of *kalokagathia* – goodness and beauty – where the worship of effort is combined with the worship of

²⁶ “What are the Olympic Values?”, *International Olympic Committee*. Accessed on: <https://olympics.com/ioc/faq/olympism-and-the-olympic-movement/what-are-the-olympic-values> [Access: July 1, 2023].

²⁷ K. Zuchora, *Wieniec ze słów. 100 wierszy na stulecie Polskiego Komitetu Olimpijskiego (1919–2019) [The Wreath Made of Words. 100 Poems for the Centenary of The Polish Olympic Committee]*, FALL, Kraków, Warszawa 2019, p. 67.

²⁸ See for example: J.J. MacAloon. *This Great Symbol: Pierre de Coubertin and the Origins of the Modern Olympic Games*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1981.

harmony.”²⁹ As for Olympism, he saw it as “a force that demolishes obstacles on the way to full human development.”³⁰ All this is visible in the above poem.

The sporting rivalry is permeated with ambition and determination, which is especially noticeable in the case of those who are considered underdogs, but thanks to their strong will achieve unexpected successes. The poem *Marathon Runner* has great potential to move the reader. Here, Zuchora focuses on the accomplishments of Bob Wieland, an exceptional figure who went down in the history of sport.

Marathon Runner

40-year-old American Bob Wieland,
 who seventeen years ago
 lost his both legs in the Vietnam War,
 covered the course of the New York Marathon
 in four days, two hours,
 twenty-eight minutes and seventeen seconds

they say:
 Pheidippides died
 twenty-five centuries ago
 of the excess of the light that he carried
 in the clenched fist of the heart
 from Marathon to Athens

saying this – they lie
 he was seen yesterday in New York
 running legless only on his hands
 down the deep gorge of streets
 in search of the truth about himself
 which the war killed in him

so that we remember

(1995)³¹

Zuchora is always fascinated with the ancient roots of sport. The story of Pheidippides, the legendary Athenian messenger who supposedly ran about 40 kilometres (from Marathon to Athens) to announce the defeat of the Persians, became an inspiration for modern marathon running. One of the best Victorian poets, Robert Browning, dedicated a poem to him, which inspired Pierre de Coubertin to invent the race now known as the marathon. The sad event – the death of Pheidippides – was, as Zuchora shows, connected with great joy

²⁹ K. Zuchora, *Coubertin a media [Coubertin and Media]*, [in:] Z. Dziubiński, M. Lenartowicz (eds.), *Kultura fizyczna a kultura masowa [Physical Culture and Mass Culture]*, AWF w Warszawie, SA-LOS RP, Warszawa 2011, p. 371.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ K. Zuchora, *W słonecznej koronie...*, p. 38.

aroused by the message he conveyed. The memory of Pheidippides is still alive, his spirit is reborn in the following generations of athletes.

The second part of the poem is an emotional reference to a special situation, one of those that stand out in the history of sports. The author speaks of the enormous achievement of the legless athlete (finishing the New York Marathon in 1986³²) and expresses the hope that it will not be forgotten. The question of the superhuman effort of the indomitable disabled athlete is what makes a huge impression. Sport is a solution to the problems of life, it can be something like a healing process, which is confirmed by the example of Wieland. Such personalities as the great runner should be remembered, because memory is one of the most important elements of the legacy of outstanding athletes.

Sports heroes, noble and sometimes idealized, often appear in Zuchora's poems, and rightly so. Society has always needed heroes who do extraordinary things for it. Tony Mason states that "Heroes should not be written out of history. They provide examples to be followed, people to believe in, inspiration to contemporaries and perhaps a slice of 'necessary fantasy.'"³³ Their fame seeps into the national psyche, touching both the individual imagination and the collective sensibility.³⁴ This is also true of the greatest athletes. Another example from Zuchora's literary oeuvre is the poem dedicated to one of the best female athletes in the history of athletics who is one of the most important figures in the pantheon of Polish sports heroes – Irena Szewińska.³⁵

Memory of Irena Szewińska (24.05.1946–29.06.2018)

You kneel down at the start of the short run
all by yourself as if to pray

the stadium dies down the sky lowers itself
silence reigns like a field before a battle

the shot has roused the winged feet
the lacerated running track writhes in pain

behind the finish line the Nike of Samothrace
waits with an olive wreath for the victory

(2019)³⁶

³² SCOUTING; *Fast Forward in Reverse*, "The New York Times", November 11, 1986, p. 20.

³³ T. Mason, 'Our Stephen and Our Harold': *Edwardian Footballers as Local Heroes*, [in:] R. Holt, J.A. Mangan, and P. Lanfranchi (eds.), *European Heroes: Myth, Identity, Sport*, Frank Cass, London 1996, 71.

³⁴ R. Holt, J.A. Mangan, *Prologue: Heroes of a European Past*, [in:] R. Holt, J.A. Mangan, and P. Lanfranchi (eds.), *European Heroes...*, p. 9.

³⁵ See, for example: M. Petruczenko, *Prześcignąć swój czas. Kariera Ireny Szewińskiej od kulis [Outstripping her Time. The Career of Irena Szewińska from Behind the Scenes]*, Ringier Axel Springer Polska, Warszawa 2019.

³⁶ K. Zuchora, *Wieniec ze słów...*, p. 68.

Szewińska, as she is portrayed in the above poem, is fully concentrated. She is aware of the control she has over the stadium and of the upcoming victory. After the initial silence, suddenly the signal sounds for the start of the race and everything changes. There is an overwhelming sense of speed and the reference to the Nike of Samothrace, depicted as a winged victor. It should be noted that the wings are a symbol of boundless freedom and limitlessness, but also of imagination, pushing boundaries and realizing dreams. As always in sport, there is pain and suffering of the competitors and the most precious thing – victorious glory. Irena Szewińska knew its taste very well – she stood on the Olympic podium seven times, winning 3 gold, 2 silver and 2 bronze medals. In interviews, she emphasized the necessity of mobilization and belief in victory. Here is an example: “I always mobilized before the most important competitions and achieved the best results there. I was nervous until the starting gun. After that, my legs carried me by themselves and that’s probably why the fans liked me, because I rarely let them down. [...] I ran to win, not to break a record.”³⁷

Alpinism (or mountaineering) has always attracted the attention of people who are addicted to the rugged beauty of nature and seek an exciting adventure. Public awareness of the dangers that await the risk-takers is growing; nevertheless, the temptation to conquer the highest mountains is usually great. Therefore, it is not surprising that there have been so many rescue actions that have gone down in the history of the Himalayas. On January 25, 2018, the team consisting of Tomasz Mackiewicz from Poland and Élisabeth Revol from France climbed to the top of Nanga Parbat, but encountered numerous obstacles during the descent and called for help (on a satellite phone). The course of the rescue action on that mountain went around the world and resonated in the media.³⁸ The brave Polish alpinists: Adam Bielecki, Denis Urubko (Russian-Polish), Jarosław Botor and Piotr Tomala were later honoured by the prestigious American Alpine Club (The David A. Sowles Memorial Award) and received the *Przełqđ Sportowy* [*Sports Review*] Award in the “Feat of the Year” category. This is how the event inspired Zuchora:

³⁷ S. Szczepłqk, *Dla zdrowia, przyjemności i po zwycięstwo* [*For Health, Pleasure, and For Victory*], “Rzeczpospolita”, September 13, 2011. Accessed on: <https://www.rp.pl/sport/art14264931-dla-zdrowia-przyjemnosci-i-po-zwyciestwo> [Access: June 5, 2023].

³⁸ See, for example: *Polish climbers carry out ‘Killer Mountain’ rescue*, “Deutsche Welle”, January 28, 2018. Accessed on: <https://www.dw.com/en/french-climber-elisabeth-revol-rescued-by-polish-team-from-nanga-parbat-peak/a-42338959> [Access: June 5, 2023].

Nanga Parbat

*To Adam Bielecki
Denis Urubko
Jarosław Bator
Piotr Tomala*

in the mountains death is sometimes more important than life
it waits for salvation in the rock crevice of the heart
blinded by the snow already insensitive to pain
in the tent of air hanging on a line

hope goes down by itself gasping for breath
it has frostbitten hands frostbitten legs
it holds on to the fixed ropes stretched in the wind
listens out for someone coming up to help

I heard a calling between the poems:
they arrived to save halfway to heaven
the life lifted up shortly over the abyss

overwhelmed by the sight of the icy wall
for a private examination of their own conscience
they brought down with hope the immortal soul

(2018)³⁹

Nanga Parbat, one of the eight-thousanders, is rightly nicknamed “Killer Mountain” as it is generally considered extremely difficult to climb. The poem above reflects this popular opinion. There is risk, a constant threat of death that seems to lurk everywhere. Nature is portrayed as unspeakably cruel, completely impervious to human attempts, no matter how drastic the reality becomes and how much help is needed. What the author notes is that there is always someone willing to help and give hope to the tormented. It is a matter of conscience, of being honest with oneself. The rescue team – after an amazingly fast nighttime ascent in freezing cold – saved one person (Revol), but found it impossible to reach and save the other (Mackiewicz, left behind by her colleague in critical condition). Overall, those to whom the poem is dedicated are heroes, but there will always be a moral dilemma as to whether more could have been done. Such considerations have always been the essence of sport and any human endeavour.

Conclusions and Final Remarks

There is no doubt that sports rivalry exerts a strong attraction – a kind of inexplicable magnetism. The drama, the struggle against adversity, the test of

³⁹ K. Zuchora, *Wieniec...*, p. 72.

character, the unexpected course of contests, defeats and victories, issues of courage, loyalty, and honour are just some of the elements of athletic competition that draw both active athletes and passive (though often equally committed) participants of the games. As an extremely complex reality, sport produces phenomena that are sometimes very distant from one another, which is visible in literary creations. Although some authors explore the darker and more problematic aspects of the sporting world, sports literature generally arises from a strong interest in it, which often turns into fascination and passion. For a fan who focuses their attention exclusively on matches and points, the discovery of the existence of such literary works can be an enlightening experience.

The way sport is portrayed in literature depends on the perspective of the author and the themes they explore. Anyone familiar with Zuchora's works will, hopefully, sense that there is more to sport than mere entertainment; there are strong emotions, there is agon, drama, nostalgia for the old times, admiration for sports history and heroes, but above all, there is a palpable hope for a better world. Sport, as it is presented here – although not devoid of sad or even tragic moments – brings colour into our lives, shows the right way, clearly uplifts people and helps them rise above their potential. All in all, this poetry is a great reminder that it is not sport itself, but the human being that is at the center, against the backdrop of all kinds of sporting competition.

The translation process of the presented poems has definitely required a certain amount of sports knowledge. The author of this translation is a scholar who specializes in the history of sports and researches its presence in broadly understood culture, including literature. He is also an amateur poet, occasionally publishing his literary works (including sports poems) and having some experience in translating poetry. All this has undoubtedly played a role and contributed significantly to the final result visible above. It should be emphasized that Zuchora's poetry – elegant in style – is characterized by both simplicity (at a broader level) and certain elements of ambiguity; the latter manifests itself in the existence of a deeper layer of meanings that do not necessarily have to be discovered immediately. Thus, like any good poetry, these works grow on us.

Last but not least, it is worth noting that sports poetry – albeit quite a niche phenomenon – is still alive in Poland. One can come across interesting sports poems in contemporary literary magazines and anthologies. Therefore, it seems justified to hope that Krzysztof Zuchora will find worthy successors in the next generations of writers fascinated with sport.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The author declared no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Sport in Literature: Sports Passion in the Literary Output of Krzysztof Zuchora on the Example of Selected Poems*.

FUNDING

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Sport in Literature: Sports Passion in the Literary Output of Krzysztof Zuchora on the Example of Selected Poems*.

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CZĘŚĆ II

TEORIA I METODYKA WYCHOWANIA FIZYCZNEGO I SPORTU



<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/sit.2023.04.05>

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Smartphone Screen Time and Physical Activity in a Sample of Czech and Slovak Secondary School Male Students

How to cite [jak cytować]: Adamčák, Š., Marko, M., Görner, K. (2023). Smartphone Screen Time and Physical Activity in a Sample of Czech and Slovak Secondary School Male Students. *Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe*, 6(4), 93–107.

Czas korzystania ze smartfonów a aktywność fizyczna na próbie uczniów czeskich i słowackich szkół średnich

Streszczenie

Nadmierne korzystanie ze smartfona może powodować spadek aktywności fizycznej. Niniejsze badanie ma na celu analizę i porównanie zależności między czasem spędzonym przed ekranem smartfona a aktywnością fizyczną na próbie uczniów czeskich i słowackich szkół średnich. Narzędziem do badania (niestandardyzowanego) czasu korzystania ze smartfonów i aktywności fizycznej

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było celowe wylosowanie 1225 uczniów czeskich i słowackich szkół średnich (w wieku $17,50 \pm 0,65$ lat), którzy uczęszczali do ostatniej klasy szkół średnich. Do analizy i porównania danych zastosowano test chi-kwadrat (χ^2) oraz statystyki opisowe. Badanie określenia zależności między czasem korzystania ze smartfona a aktywnością fizyczną prowadzono przez 9 miesięcy. Po przeanalizowaniu danych okazało się, że 42,12% ($n = 516$) ankietowanych wskazało na 1 do 3 godzin dziennie czasu spędzonego przed ekranem smartfona ($p < 0,01$). Oceniając czas przed ekranem smartfona, ankietowana grupa ($n = 1225$) uznała go za czas adekwatny (58,21%, $n = 713$) ($p < 0,01$). Jeśli chodzi o czas spędzany ze smartfonem, badana grupa ($n = 1225$) preferowała serwisy społecznościowe (53,58%, $n = 656$) ($p < 0,01$). Aplikacje na smartfony są odpowiednimi narzędziami nie tylko do poprawy jakości życia, ale także do skutecznego promowania aktywności fizycznej w czasie wolnym wśród dorastających chłopców.

Słowa kluczowe: dorastający chłopiec, aktywność fizyczna, czas spędzony ze smartfonem, uczniowie szkół średnich.

Abstract

Excessive use of smartphones can cause a decrease in physical activity. The present study aims at analysing and comparing the relationship between smartphone screen time and physical activity in a sample of Czech and Slovak secondary school male students. The survey instrument (non-standardised) for measuring smartphone screen time and physical activity was intentional sampling of 1225 Czech and Slovak secondary school male students (aged $17.50 \pm .65$ years) who attended the last year of secondary schools. Chi-square test (χ^2) and descriptive statistics were used to analyse and compare the data. Determining the relationship between smartphone screen time and physical activity was carried out for 9 months. After analysing the data, it turned out that 42.12% ($n = 516$) of the survey group pointed to 1 to 3 hours/ day of smartphone screen time ($p < 0.01$). When evaluating their smartphone screen time, the survey group ($n = 1225$) considered it as adequate (58.21%, $n = 713$) ($p < 0.01$). In terms of the smartphone screen time activity, the survey group ($n = 1225$) preferred social networking services (53.58%, $n = 656$) ($p < 0.01$). Smartphone apps are adequate tools not only to improve quality of life, but also to promote leisure-time physical activity among adolescent boys.

Keywords: adolescent boys, physical activity, smartphone screen time, secondary school male students.

Introduction

Dependency on digital screen use resulting in an ever-increasing and excessive daily screen time is associated with non-communicable diseases (NCDs), in particular, cancer, heart disease, diabetes and chronic respiratory disease, the leading cause of death worldwide and an emerging global health threat (Sultana et al., 2021). Digital screen use is prevalent among adolescent boys, most of whom use smartphones, computers, and game consoles. Smartphone screen time is very common among adolescent boys being major smartphone users, particularly in modern society, because it constitutes an important part of their life (Haghjoo et al., 2022). According to recent data, average smartphone screen

time is 3 hours and 15 minutes and 1 in 5 smartphone users makes use of their smartphone for an average of 4.5 hours/ day (Liu et al., 2022), being more than recommended time for adolescent boys and girls (≤ 2 hours/ day) (Kim et al., 2020). An excessive use of a smartphone (≥ 2 hours/ day) can affect quality of life among adolescent boys and girls and ≥ 2 hours/ day of smartphone screen time do not provide necessary energy, but result in lack of interest in doing anything else (Niklová et al., 2020).

Smartphones are emerging as a common device among adolescent boys, offering portable computer devices of a mobile phone and computing functions, namely the Internet, navigation system, camera, pedometer, gaming devices and social networking services (e.g. Meta – Facebook, Instagram) (Kim et al., 2015). Almost a quarter of adolescent boys are dependent on smartphone screen time, which becomes like an addiction. Available evidence shows that smartphone use (screen time) and abuse by an adolescent sample of Spanish secondary school male and female students (49% male and 51% female, aged 13–18 years) was excessive, i.e. 41.4% of the adolescent sample ($n = 614$) admitted to abusing smartphones sometimes, 18.3% of the adolescent boys and girls admitted to abusing smartphones more often, and 24% of the secondary school students defined themselves as smartphone addicts (de Albéniz Garrote et al., 2021). Smartphone possession increases with age, with market available data reporting 83% of adolescent boys and girls (the United Kingdom, aged 12–15 years) owning a smartphone, 30.3% of them changing their smartphone every year, and 50.7% every 2 years (Girela-Serrano et al., 2022). According to recent data, adolescent boys (aged 15 ± 2 years) who own a smartphone reached 89%, doubling over a 6-year period (Abi-Jaoude et al., 2020). Available American market data revealed that 91% of adolescent boys and girls reported having access to a smartphone, while 84% of them had their own device (Rideout & Robb, 2019). Another analysis of Australian data revealed that 86% of adolescent boys and girls owned smartphones in grade 8, increasing to 93% by grade 11 (Vernon et al., 2018).

With their multiple functions and different social networking services and technology being combined into one device, smartphones provide convenience and efficiency (Cheung et al., 2022). Smartphone overdependence among adolescent boys who use smartphones for ≥ 2 hours/ day on average leads to musculoskeletal pain, in particular, neck, shoulder, and lower back pain (Maurya et al., 2022), resulting in poor body posture and physical inactivity (Dewi et al., 2021). Longer use of smartphones in bed is associated with adolescent sleep issues, i.e. shorter sleep duration and worse sleep quality (Song & Kim, 2022). More time spent on smartphone use is associated with lower well-being and symptoms of anxiety and depression (Ozer & Kılıç, 2018). Believe it or not, smartphone screen time also has some positive aspects, helping adolescent

boys and girls, particularly in learning (access to news), communication (connection with peers) and entertainment (Ross et al., 2016). Monitoring physical activity with the help of smartphone apps may help adolescent boys increase their activity levels (Körmendi, 2015). Following professional literature trends, the present study aims at analysing and comparing the relationship between smartphone screen time and physical activity in the sample of Czech and Slovak secondary school male students.

Methods

Participants

In terms of the study aim, the target population consisted of adolescent boys who attended the last year of selected secondary schools (i.e. conservatory, grammar school and vocational school) and regions (cities and towns) in the Czech Republic (Prague and Brno) and Slovakia (Bratislava and Košice). The adolescent boys who constituted the research sample were recruited via various sources, particularly through social media (e.g., Meta – Facebook and Instagram). The recruitment process was conducted regularly, in intervals of 3 weeks, aiming at an intentional sampling regarding age, gender, year of study, category of school and region (town/ city) / country. 1 303 correctly filled-in debriefing forms (non-standardised survey) were included in the data interpretation process, however 5.98% ($n = 78$) of them did not meet the inclusion criteria: (i) Not having health issues (e.g., being ill for a long time or medically exempt from participating in physical education classes); (ii) Pre-selected gender (male); (iii) Pre-selected year of study (4th and 5th); Pre-selected secondary school (conservatory, grammar school and vocational school); (iiii) Pre-selected region (town/ city) and country (Prague and Brno in the Czech Republic and Bratislava and Košice in Slovakia); (iiiii) Owning a smartphone. Having met the inclusion criteria (data cleaning), the survey group consisted of 1225 Czech (39.34%, $n = 482$) and Slovak (60.66%, $n = 743$) secondary school male students (adolescent boys). The distribution of the survey group ($n = 1225$), regarding the inclusion criteria was as follows: (i) the Czech Republic – Conservatory (5.54%, $n = 23$), Grammar school (10.60%, $n = 44$) and Vocational school (83.86%, $n = 415$); (ii) Slovakia – Grammar school (31.50%, $n = 234$) and Vocational school (68.50%, $n = 509$).

Measures and Procedures

A single-measure comparative cross-sectional study (descriptive) was carried out, in order to determine the relationship between smartphone use and physical activity in the sample of Czech and Slovak secondary school male stu-

dents (adolescent boys, $n = 1225$). The research instrument of non-standardised survey was created with an intent and consisted of 2 sections: (i) Primary demographic information (e.g., age, gender, year of study, category of school and region (town/ city) / country); (ii) Non-standardised survey items, which consisted of 4 closed questions referring to: (i) Average smartphone screen time (5 closed questions: None (screen time), ≤ 1 hour, 1 – 3 hours, 3 – 5 hours, ≥ 5 hours); (ii) Smartphone screen time and self-evaluation (4 closed questions: Little time, Adequate time, a lot of time, Inadequately big amount of time); (iii) Smartphone screen time activity (4 closed questions: Social networking services, Physical activity, Artistic activity, Playing video games); (iiii) Smartphone use and physical activity (4 closed questions: Using a smartphone regularly, Using a smartphone irregularly, Not using a smartphone, Not doing any physical activity).

During the unlimited time session of December, 2020 – August, 2021, the survey group ($n = 1225$) took part in the non-standardised survey, which was available online, and reviewed the survey data in order to clarify the content of the non-standardised survey (available only to full-aged adolescent boys). Online feedback during the unlimited time did not indicate any problems with the cross-sectional design (technical) and the non-standardised survey (grammar and vocabulary). As for the underage adolescent boys, the debriefing survey forms of the non-standardised survey were distributed (face-to-face) by the authors (meeting the parental consent requirements) in their native language (Czech and Slovak), not revealing any possible information about their identity. Financial incentives were not given (voluntary participation); the survey group ($n = 1225$) received the final report with their personal results afterwards. The online version of the non-standardised survey was chosen due to its cost effectiveness, time saving, easy accessibility and changing epidemic situation of Covid-19. The online version of the non-standardised survey was created and distributed using the online survey portal of Microsoft Forms, Office 365 (Microsoft Corp., Redmond, WA, USA) (Andrade, 2020; Adamčák et al., 2023).

Data analysis

Available survey data (online and in person) collected through the non-standardised survey (debriefing forms) was tabulated (figured) in a database designed precisely for a single-measure comparative cross-sectional (descriptive) study. In terms of incidence of responses, each item of the survey group ($n = 1225$) was analysed, compared, and evaluated by using Tap3 – Gamo programme (Banská Bystrica, Slovakia). Available survey data of the survey group ($n = 1225$) was pooled after cleaning, analysed, and compared by using basic descriptive statistical methods such as multiplicity (n), arithmetic mean (\bar{x}) and percentage frequency analysis (%). The method of inductive statistics – chi-

square test (χ^2), whose significance level (α) was .01 and .05., evaluated the difference between 1225 Czech (39.34%, $n = 482$) and Slovak (60.66%, $n = 743$) secondary school male students (adolescent boys) (Sharpe, 2015).

Results

Average Smartphone Screen Time and Self-evaluation

According to the study aim, Figure 1 illustrates the average smartphone screen time within the survey group ($n = 1225$) and confirms that the survey answer of 1 – 3 hours predominated, as it was selected by 41.62% ($n = 510$) of Czech (42.32%, $n = 204$) and Slovak (40.92%, $n = 304$) secondary school male students (adolescent boys). The survey answer of 3 – 5 hours was chosen by 27.39% of Czech ($n = 132$) and 17.90% of Slovak ($n = 132$) secondary school male students (22.65%, $n = 278$). Another survey answer of ≤ 1 hour was pointed by 19.78% ($n = 242$) of Czech (11.83%, $n = 57$) and Slovak (27.73%, $n = 206$) secondary school male students. Smartphone screen time of ≥ 5 hours was chosen by 13.80% ($n = 169$) of Czech (18.05%, $n = 87$) and Slovak (9.56%, $n = 71$) secondary school male students. 0 hours (none) of smartphone screen time within the survey group ($n = 1225$) was reported by 2.17% ($n = 26$) of Czech (.41%, $n = 2$) and Slovak (3.90%, $n = 29$) secondary school male students.

Considering the average smartphone screen time within the survey group ($n = 1225$), the intergroup difference of Czech (39.34%, $n = 482$) and Slovak (60.66%, $n = 743$) secondary school male students revealed the significant difference ($p < .01$) ($\chi^2(4) = 77.13$; $p = 7.05E-16$).

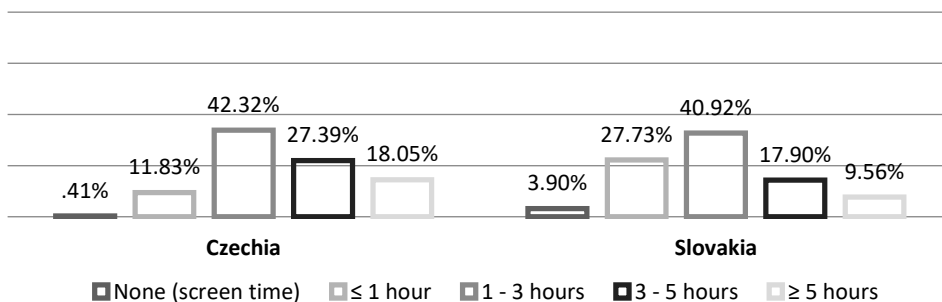


Figure 1

Average smartphone screen time within the survey group ($n = 1225$)

When it comes to self-evaluating smartphone screen time within the survey group ($n = 1225$), the Czech ($n = 482$) and Slovak (743) secondary school male students reported spending an adequate amount of time (58.21%, $n = 713$) on

their smartphones. According to Figure 2, 21.99 % (n = 106) of Czech and 23.42% (n = 174) of Slovak secondary school male students indicated devoting a lot of time to their smartphone screen time. Little time (29.30%, n = 359) devoted to smartphone screen time was chosen by 13.28% (n = 64) of Czech and 16.02% (n = 109) of Slovak secondary school male students. Spending an inadequately big amount of time on smartphone screen time was reported by 6.85% (n = 33) of Czech and 2.02% (n = 15) of Slovak secondary school male students.

Considering the smartphone screen time and self-evaluation within the survey group (n = 1225), the intergroup difference of Czech (39.34%, n = 482) and Slovak (60.66%, n = 743) secondary school male students revealed the significant difference ($p < .01$) ($\chi^2(3) = 19.13$; $p = 2.56E-04$).

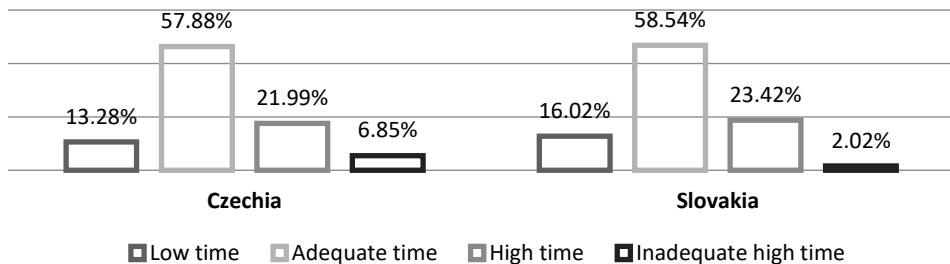


Figure 2

Smartphone screen time and self-evaluation within the survey group (n = 1225)

Smartphone Screen Time Activity and Physical Activity

Smartphone screen time activity within the survey group (n = 1225) is illustrated by Figure 3 and confirms that social networking services (e.g., Meta – Facebook, Instagram) predominated, i.e. this option was chosen by 51.45% (n = 248) of Czech and 55.72% (n = 414) of Slovak secondary school male students. Smartphone screen time artistic activity (e.g., taking photos, listening to music, and recording videos) (27.81%, n = 340) was selected by 28.42% (n = 137) of Czech and 27.19% (n = 202) of Slovak secondary school male students. According to Figure 3, 16.18% (n = 78) of Czech and 13.73% (n = 102) of Slovak secondary school male students reported playing video games. Monitoring physical activity with the use of their smartphone was reported by 19 (3.94%) Czech and 25 (3.36 %) Slovak secondary school male students.

Considering the smartphone screen time activity within the survey group (n = 1225), the intergroup difference of Czech (39.34%, n = 482) and Slovak (60.66%, n = 743) secondary school male students revealed the significant difference ($p < .01$) ($\chi^2(3) = 2.61$; $p = 4.55E-01$).

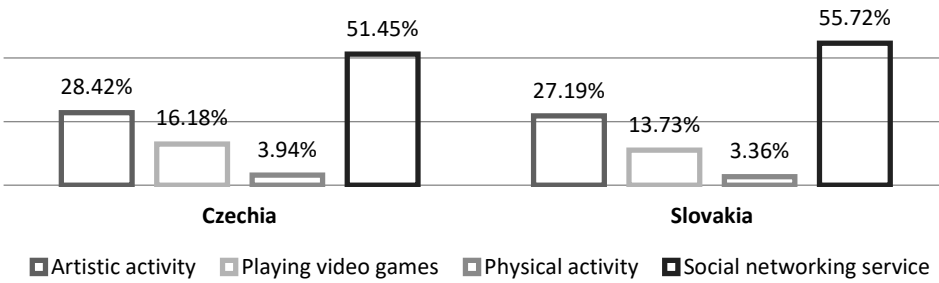


Figure 3
Smartphone screen time activity within the survey group (n = 1225)

Figure 4 illustrates smartphone use and physical activity within the survey group (n = 1225) and reveals that 167 (34.65%) Czech and 332 (44.68%) Slovak secondary school male students were using their smartphones irregularly (39.67%, n = 486). Using a smartphone regularly (17.51%, n = 215) was reported by 16.18% (n = 78) of Czech and 18.84% (n = 140) of Slovak secondary school male students. Not using a smartphone at all (35.01%, n = 430) was selected by 40.25% (n = 194) of Czech and 29.88% (n = 222) of Slovak secondary school male students. According to Figure 4, 43 (8.92%) Czech and 49 (6.60%) Slovak secondary school male students admitted to not doing any physical activity.

Considering smartphone use and physical activity within the survey group (n = 1225), the intergroup difference of Czech (39.34%, n = 482) and Slovak (60.66%, n = 743) secondary school male students revealed the significant difference ($p < .01$) ($\chi^2(3) = 19.75$; $p = 1.91E-04$).

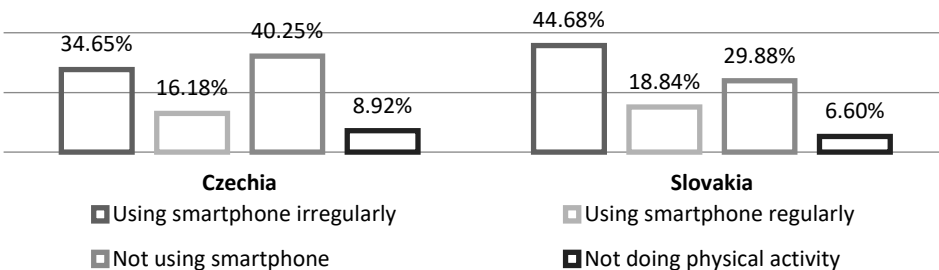


Figure 4
Smartphone use and physical activity within the survey group (n = 1225)

Discussion

Average Smartphone Screen Time and Self-evaluation

Adolescent boys are described as “digital natives”, with smartphones embedded in their lives. Czech (39.34%, $n = 482$) and Slovak (60.66%, $n = 743$) secondary school male students are no exception because 204 (42.32%) Czech and 304 (40.92%) Slovak secondary school male students reported smartphone screen time of 1 – 3 hours/ day. American adolescent boys and girls consumed 9 hours and 33 minutes of digital screen time/ day, half of which was spent on their smartphones (Rideout & Robb, 2019). As for the survey group of 263 Hungarian secondary school students, their average smartphone screen time was 4.48 hours/ day (adolescent boys – 3.40 hours/ day and girls – 5.39 hours) (Körmendi, 2015). The research conducted on 226 Spanish adolescent boys and girls (aged 17 – 18 years) revealed that their smartphone screen time averaged 3.5 hours/ day (Cabr -Riera et al., 2019). The examination of Chinese adolescent boys and girls (aged 17 years) revealed an excessive increase in smartphone screen time from 27.2% in 2011 to $\geq 70\%$ in 2019 (Liu et al., 2022). Another study of Chinese adolescent girls (Hong Kong) revealed that about 83% of 390 adolescent girls (aged 12.5 years) spent 1 – 3 hours/ day using a smartphone [6]. Having ≤ 2 hours/ day of smartphone screen time was reported by 58% and 53% of Indian adolescent boys and girls, while 14% of adolescent boys and 4% of adolescent girls spent ≥ 3 hours/ day using smartphones (Maurya et al., 2022). Existing evidence of Brazilian data shows high prevalence of smartphone screen time among university male and female students (aged + 18 years) who spent almost 5 hours/ day on their smartphones, which constituted 21% of their day (Mescollotto et al., 2019). Weekdays average more smartphone screen time than weekends (Deng et al., 2019).

Smartphone Screen Time Activity and Physical Activity

Adolescent boys use their smartphones at varying times and for various purposes. The most common smartphone activity differs between contemporary adolescent boys (Generation Z; currently 5 to 25 years) and all other age groups who appear to use their smartphones for productive purposes, namely e-mail writing and following directions (maps). Generation Z (Gen Z) appears to use their smartphones for entertainment purposes, in particular for social networking services (e.g., Meta – Facebook and Instagram) and artistic activity (e.g., taking photos, listening to music, and recording videos). And again, Gen Z of Czech (39.34%, $n = 482$) and Slovak (60.66%, $n = 743$) secondary school male students are no exception because social networking services (e.g., Meta – Facebook, Instagram) dominated among the research sample of Czech (51.45%, $n = 248$) and

Slovak (55.72%, n = 414) secondary school male students. Czech adolescent boys (49.83%, n = 13542) and girls (50.17%, n = 13635), aged ± 12 years, reported making/ receiving phone calls (72%), followed by typing/ sending messages through social networking services (66%) to be the most common smartphone screen time activities (Kopecký et al., 2021). Existing evidence of Hungarian data shows calling and visiting social networking services as the most common smartphone screen time activity among 263 secondary school students (Körmendi, 2015). According to recent data, 70% of adolescent boys use social networking services several times a day, up from a third of adolescent boys in 2012 (Rideout & Robb, 2019). Canadian (Ontario) adolescent boys and girls reported spending ≥ 5 hours/ day on social networking services, which increased from 11% in 2013, to 16% in 2015 and to 20% in 2017 (Boak et al., 2018). Another analysis of Slovak data revealed that 519 adolescent boys and girls (aged ± 19.40 years) were using their smartphones for chatting and making calls (Niklová et al., 2020). An age of initial use of social networking services is getting lower, namely to 12 – 13 years, reflecting the need to create personal social identity (Spoina et al., 2021). Taking photos, listening to music, and recording videos (27.81%, n = 340) was chosen by 137 (28.42%) Czech and 202 (27.19%) Slovak secondary school male students. Some believe that listening to music and podcasts on one's smartphone does not add to one's smartphone screen time. However, it applies to listening to music and podcasts played through smartphone apps like Apple Music or Spotify. Taking photos (51.66%), followed by listening to music (47.10%) (e.g., Apple Music, Spotify) through a smartphone was a common smartphone screen time activity among Czech adolescent boys and girls (Kopecký et al., 2021). Among adolescents, in addition to listening to music and taking photos, smartphones are frequently used for communication purposes (e.g., phone calls, social networking services) and Internet browsing (Lopez-Fernandez et al., 2018). Playing video games (14.96%, n = 183) was reported by 78 (16.18%) Czech and 102 (13.73%) Slovak secondary school male students, which was less compared to Czech adolescent boys and girls (49.52%) (Kopecký et al., 2021). According to recent data, the majority of smartphone use is devoted to leisure and learning, and 90.9% of Chinese adolescent boys (51.64%, n = 489) and girls (48.36%, n = 458) (Guandong Province) on average admitted to sitting during these activities. Problematic smartphone use positively correlated with sedentary behaviour (Xiang et al., 2020). At present, an increasing number of adolescent boys is searching for health-related data and guiding their fitness via smartphone apps (He et al., 2021). Smartphone use (apps) and physical activity revealed that 16.18% (n = 78) of Czech and 18.84% (n = 140) of Slovak secondary school male students regularly used their smartphone for that purpose (Figure 4). According to Australian data, 26.5% (n = 255) of adolescent boys (28.9%, n = 278) and girls (71.1%, n = 685) reported using digital platforms (apps) for physical

activity (Parker et al., 2021). Physical activity decreases during the adolescent period (Demirbilek & Minaz, 2020), therefore smartphones are an ideal tool for promoting physical activity in those with little intrinsic motivation (Harries et al., 2016).

Conclusions

Excessive smartphone screen time may negatively affect adolescent boys' health by reducing their physical activity level. Smartphones are an integral part of adolescent boys' daily lives, influencing their whole lives, thus they should be used effectively. Therefore, the present study was aimed at analysing and comparing the relationship between smartphone screen time and physical activity in the sample of Czech and Slovak secondary school male students.

When self-evaluating their smartphone screen time, the survey group (n = 1225) considered it to be adequate (58.21%, n = 713) ($p < .01$), whereas 33 (6.85%) Czech and 15 (2.02%) Slovak secondary school male students believed that they devote too much time to their screens ($p < .01$). Average smartphone screen time of Czech (39.34%, n = 482) and Slovak (60.66%, n = 743) secondary school male students revealed the statistical significance ($p < .01$) in favour of Slovak secondary school male students (< smartphone screen time).

An influence of new (smartphone) technology will certainly intervene in our everyday life. Therefore, it is important that today's adolescent boys, for whom a smartphone is an "integral part of being", be motivated to increase their activity level. Playful activities such as Pokémon Go, Geocaching, or physical activity challenges implemented through various apps on a smartphone set a good example (e.g., Samsung Health, Garmin and Strava). An early adolescence period offers an opportunity to shape young persons, taking into account their holistic development. That could be achieved by guiding them and playing with them, familiarising them with various useful (playful) smartphone apps associated with increasing activity levels. Better understanding of adolescent boys' smartphone use, screen time and purpose may help their parents and PE teachers develop and implement preventive measures.

STATEMENT OF ETHICS

This study was conducted in accordance with the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki. The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the *Artistic and Pedagogical Council of the Faculty of Performing Arts, Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia (May 30, 2023, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia)*. All participants provided written informed consent to participate in this study.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Smartphone Screen Time and Physical Activity in a Sample of Czech and Slovak Secondary School Male Students*.

FUNDING

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Smartphone Screen Time and Physical Activity in a Sample of Czech and Slovak Secondary School Male Students*.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/sit.2023.04.06>

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Priority areas of scientific research in the field of esports: an analytical review based on publications in the scientometric database

How to cite [jak cytować]: Piatysotska, S., Podrigalo, L., Olkhovyi, O., Yefremenko, A., Ashanin, V. (2023). Priority areas of scientific research in the field of esports: an analytical review based on publications in the scientometric database. *Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe*, 6(4), 109–136.

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Priorytetowe kierunki badań naukowych w obszarze e-sportu: przegląd analityczny na podstawie materiałów publikacji w naukowych i metrycznych bazach danych

Streszczenie

Cybersport jest złożonym, wieloskładnikowym zjawiskiem, o czym świadczy obecność dużej liczby prac naukowych z różnych obszarów tematycznych. Celem artykułu jest analityczna analiza publikacji poświęconych e-sportowi w bazach bibliometrycznych Scopus oraz ustalenie priorytetowych kierunków badań naukowych w tej dziedzinie (w okresie od 2005 do 2022 roku). Zastosowaliśmy bibliometryczne metody przetwarzania otrzymanych informacji w kontekście e-sportu. Wykorzystano program VOSviewer 1.6.18. Skonstruowane mapy bibliometryczne pozwoliły określić wiodące obszary tematyczne badań, najpopularniejsze obszary badań w tej dziedzinie: fenomen e-sportu jako fenomen wieloaspektowy, proces uczenia się i treningu w e-sporcie, poprawa jakości grania i zwiększanie wydolności fizycznej dla pomyślnego udziału w zawodach, problemy zdrowotne zawodników i e-sportowców, przygotowanie fizyczne e-sportowców, badanie wpływu gier komputerowych wykorzystywanych w trakcie zajęć na zdolności psychomotoryczne człowieka, charakterystyka aktywności e-sportowej ze względu na płeć i wiek, sieci społecznościowe i media pełniące funkcje komunikacyjne i informacyjne, psychologiczne aspekty e-sportu.

Podkreśla się niedostatek badań poświęconych specyfice budowania procesu treningowego z e-sportowcami, problematyce przewidywania sukcesu w e-sporcie, określania cech zawodowych ważnych dla zawodników, badania wpływu obciążeń treningowych i startowych na stan funkcjonalny sportowców e-sportowych.

Słowa kluczowe: e-sport, gry video, mapy bibliometryczne, VOSviewer.

Abstract

Esports is a complex multi-component phenomenon, which is confirmed by the presence of a large number of scientific works devoted to various subject areas. The purpose of the article is an analytical analysis of publications devoted to esports in the Scopus bibliometric database and the establishment of priority scientific research areas in this field (for the period from 2005 to 2022). We used bibliometric methods for processing the information received in the context of esports with the program VOSviewer 1.6.18. The constructed bibliometric maps made it possible to identify the leading thematic research areas, i.e. the most popular areas of research in this field: the phenomenon of esports as a multi-faceted phenomenon, the process of learning and training in esports, increasing gaming and physical performance for successful participation in competitions, health problems of players and esportspeople, physical training of esportspeople, study of the influence of computer games on human psychomotor abilities, gender and age characteristics of esports activities, psychological aspects of esports.

There is lack of research on the specifics of building a training process with esportspeople, the issue of predicting success in e-sports, definition of professionally important qualities for players, study of the influence of training and competitive loads on the functional state of esports participants.

Keywords: esports, video games, bibliometric mapping, VOSviewer.

Introduction

The rapid development of multimedia technologies and their growing availability for various contingents, in particular children and adolescents, lead to the emergence of new popular forms of human activity associated with the constant use of multimedia applications. The use of mobile phones, computers, tablets, TVs, DVD players and game consoles is associated with many applications – from professional to consumer and entertainment ones. At the same time, it cannot be denied that the intensification of technological progress has a significant impact on the physical and mental health of the population (Podrigalo et al., 2020). Video games are a separate phenomenon associated with the spread of computer applications and the global Internet. Those that have a pronounced competitive component, and whose success depends mainly on the skills of the players, subsequently transformed into computer sports or esports.

The term “esports” was first used in a 1999 press release from the Online Gaming Association, defining it as a set of activities in which people participate, exercise and develop mental and physical skills through information or communication technology (Wagner, 2006). More recently, esports has come to be defined as a competitive sport in which gamers use their physical and mental abilities to participate in various games in a virtual electronic environment (International Esports Federation, 2021). The study of the phenomenon of esports and its various facets is becoming more common among scientists around the world, although an academic interest in it and the number of publications about esports have been increasing significantly only since 2016 (Yamanaka et al., 2021). At the same time, it is necessary to distinguish between the concepts of gaming and esports, where the fundamental difference lies in the ultimate goal of the activity. The gamer is trying to get the most out of the game process, and the esports player is trying to win the competition with a reward. However, a common feature of these two activities is that players spend a large amount of time on the game, although their reasons and motives differ significantly.

Scientists note that the rapid development of esports is accompanied by a number of prerequisites. One of the most important factors in the promotion of esports is the development and dissemination of technology around the world. This led to the emergence of new, more advanced computer games and gave impetus to the mass enthusiasm for them among young people (Shynkaruk et al., 2018; Heere, 2018).

Since esports is a multi-faceted phenomenon in its specificity, the works on its research are conducted in various subject areas, namely management, physical and mental well-being, productivity, psychology, legal regulations pertaining to the activities of esports players, etc. A separate direction is treating esports activities like a separate sports discipline. This requires the study of factors and

indicators that determine the effectiveness of this competitive activity, training programs and methods for improving the players' performance. At the same time, this is associated with certain risk factors for the physical and mental health of esports players, which also occupies an important place in modern research (Xie Y, et al., 2022).

The constantly growing number of scientific studies in this area requires a balanced approach to their analysis in order to systematize and identify promising areas. Some authors have begun work on identifying and creating a list of areas for studying the phenomenon of esports by the world's leading scientists. In particular, (Yamanaka et al., 2021), whose work was carried out in June 2021, conducted a bibliometric analysis using the SciMAT software based on the materials of the Web of Science scientometric database for the keywords eSport and electronic sport. The authors selected 246 articles about eSports for the period from 2006 to 2020 and established the statistical information on these works, namely: the categories of the database which comprise the majority of articles, the journals containing the largest number of articles on this topic, the most cited articles and authors from the given field of their research. However, the content of the found publications has not been analyzed in detail and the priority directions of publications have not been determined. It should be noted that the SciMAT software is significantly inferior to the VOSviewer program in terms of the range of functionality.

The study (Cranmer et al., 2021) proposes an esports matrix representing three different areas of esports: representation of current physical sports (digitalization of sports), a traditional gaming experience (computer games as competitions, multiplayer), and esports using new technologies such as virtual and augmented reality (immersive reality sports). The esports matrix was developed based on the industry's experience, which confirmed its suitability and relevance to deepen its conceptual and empirical understanding and, more importantly, would contribute to a more structured approach to exploring the potential of esports.

A systematic review (Xie Y et al., 2022) provides an estimate of the prevalence of musculoskeletal risk factors associated with the use of mobile handheld devices. Searches were made in Pubmed, Medline, Web of Science, CINAHL and Embase. The review shows that the prevalence of musculoskeletal complaints among mobile device users ranges from 1.0 to 67.8%, while neck complaints have a high prevalence ranging from 17.3 to 67.8%. This study also finds some evidence that neck flexion, frequency of phone calls, texting, and gaming are associated with musculoskeletal complaints among mobile device users. Evidence is inconclusive for other risk factors, such as duration of use and methods of human interaction with the device, due to conflicting results or limited research.

Kelly, S., & Leung, J. (Kelly & Leung, 2021). conducted a meta-review based on 10 reviews that reported any health effects (physical, lifestyle, cognitive,

mental, or social) of esports, online competition, or participation in video games for both the player and the viewer. While past reviews have explored the impact of video games on health, few have focused on the newly developed context of gaming, including both playing and streaming, recognition as a professional sport, and potential careers for gamers. Most of the preliminary reviews have focused on the impact of video games on the physical health of adolescents and young adults, but none of them has explored the impact of different forms of gaming participation in the new gaming era and their potential differential impact on health.

A separate area of research in the field of esports is the search for effective ways to develop the esports ecosystem and bring it into the framework of the traditional system for other sports. Murray et al. (Murray et al. 2022) in their article state that there is currently no collective diplomatic strategy in place to counter existing problems in the esports industry, or to assist in realising any core policy objectives for the common good. However, if esports is to be successful, sustainable and beneficial for society, then a new way of harnessing its power – in the form of esports diplomacy – should be adopted. As the authors note, its application could produce reciprocal outcomes and turn esports from a threat into an opportunity.

However, in the identified works, articles from one scientometric database or databases of a separate thematic area were mainly analyzed, which significantly reduces their number. The proposed criteria for dividing the esports sector into separate areas need to be expanded, also taking into account current trends in recent scientific publications. This is what determined the relevance of the chosen direction of work, the purpose of which was the analytical analysis of publications devoted to esports in the Scopus bibliometric database and the establishment of priority scientific directions in this area.

Methods

To identify the leaders in research on the problems of our study, we used bibliometric methods (He Q., 1999, Smith LC, 1981) for processing the information received in the context of esports. To do this, we used VOSviewer 1.6.18, a software tool for building and visualizing bibliometric networks. (VOSviewer version 1.6.18., 2021). The most important for the study was the implementation of the method of keyword analysis (He Q., 1999) and direct citation (Smith LC, 1981). The most frequently cited references were used to identify promising areas of research in this category. Moreover, we also used distance-based bibliometric maps, in case of which the distance between two elements reflects the

strength of the relationship between the elements. The smallest distance usually indicates a stronger connection.

The search for literature sources was carried out in the bibliometric database Scopus (for the period from 2005 to 2022) using the keywords: *esport**, *cybersport**, *electronic sport**.

As of 10/01/2022, 1010 articles were found in the Scopus database in the following thematic areas (number of publications): Computer Science (336), Medicine (287), Social Sciences (261), Health Professions Business (252), Management and Accounting (128), Psychology (119), Engineering (106), Arts and Humanities (78), Mathematics (54), Decision Sciences (38).

The most popular categories of publications were determined by quantitative index as well as authors and journals with the largest number of publications on the subject under study in the database (Table 1).

Table 1

Results analysis table for Scopus categories, authors and countries fields

Scopus (N=1010)
TOP-10 categories by number of publications, n; percentage of the total number of publications
Computer Science (336), Medicine (287), Social Sciences (261), Health Professions Business (252), Management and Accounting (128), Psychology (119), Engineering (106), Arts and Humanities (78), Mathematics (54), Decision Sciences (38).
TOP-10 authors by number of publications, n
Drachen, A. (15), Burnaev, E. (14), Hamari, J. (14), Somov, A. (14), Macey, J. (11), Campbell, M.J. (10), Toth, A.J. (10), Block, F. (9) Demediuk, S. (9), Byon, K.K. (8)
TOP-10 journals by number of publications, n
Apunts Medicina De L Esport (165), Lecture Notes In Computer Science Including Subseries Lecture Notes In Artificial Intelligence And Lecture Notes In Bioinformatics (26), Frontiers In Psychology (26), Conference On Human Factors In Computing Systems Proceedings (21), Lecture Notes In Networks And Systems (21), ACM International Conference Proceeding Series (14), Ceur Workshop Proceedings (14), International Journal Of Environmental Research And Public Health (14), Computers In Human Behavior (13), Frontiers In Sports And Active Living (12)
TOP-10 countries/regions by number of publications, n
United States (230), Spain (193), Australia (78), United Kingdom (76), Germany (73), Russian Federation (48), Canada (38), Finland (36), China (30), Japan (29)

According to the total indicator of the number of works defined in the country/region, the largest number of them belongs to the USA (230), Spain (193) and Australia (78) (Figure 1).

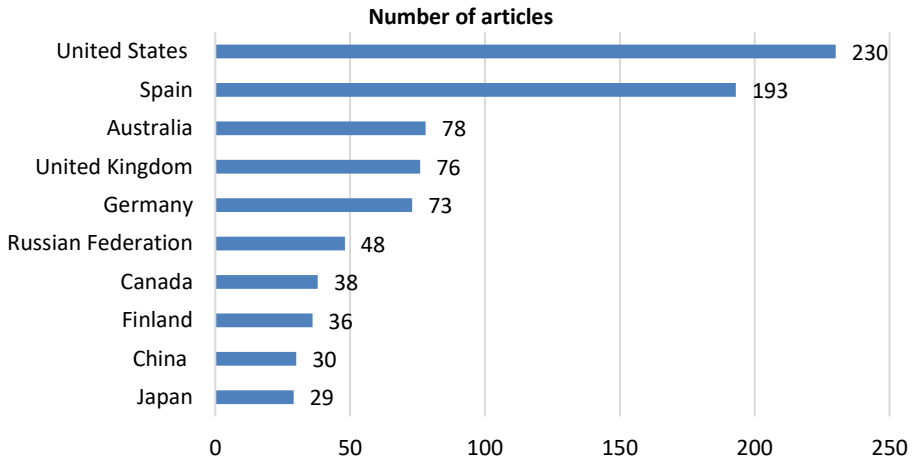


Figure 1
TOP-10 countries/regions by number of publications, n

Results

Analyzing the number of publications by year of publication, it was found that interest in esports is constantly increasing. The periods 2005–2013, 2014–2015 are highlighted separately due to a relatively small number of publications currently available. Since 2018, the number of publications in the database we have studied has shown a steady upward trend (Figure 2).

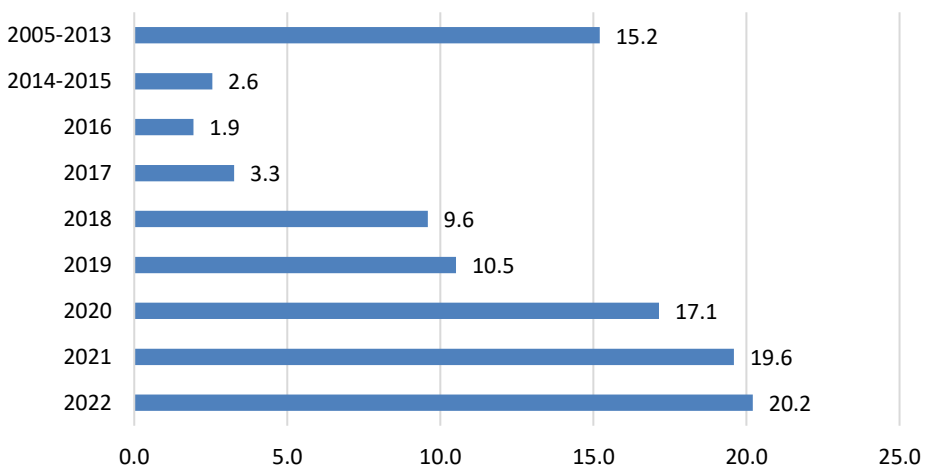


Figure 2
Number of publications (%) on the keywords “e-sports”, “cybersport” from 2005 to 2022, in the Scopus database

The analysis carried out allowed us to create the corresponding visualization maps. Network visualization of the results obtained from the Scopus database is shown in Figure 3.

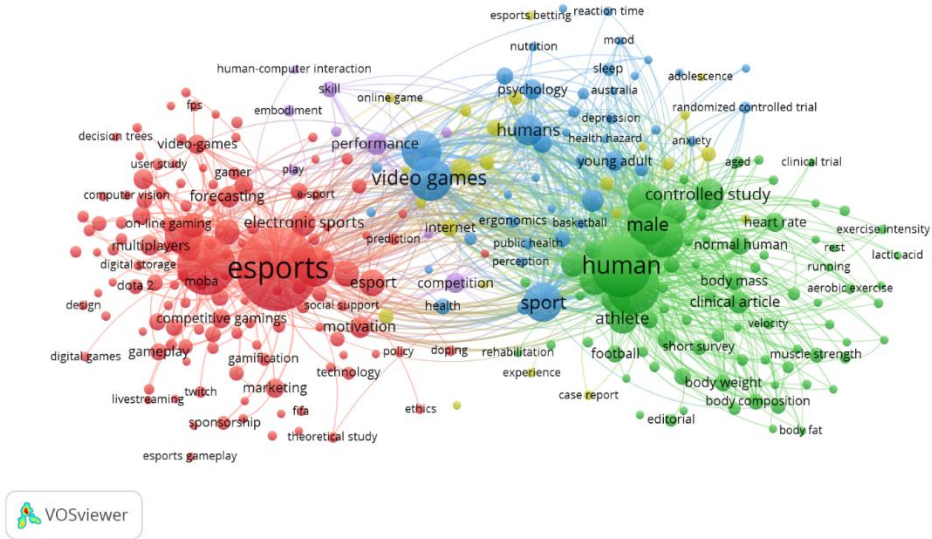


Figure 3

Main keywords in publications on the subject of esports. Source: Own research based on data obtained from the Scopus database (10/01/2022)

The network is based on 259 elements – keywords. They are grouped into 5 clusters. The size of the keywords corresponds to the number of links received, and the spatial proximity reflects the strength of the relationship between subjects. According to Figure 2, the most popular studies can be identified. They are centered around the keywords “esports”, “human”, “video games”, “sport”, “controlled study”, “electronic sport”, “performance”, “psychology”.

The first cluster is the largest, contains 131 keywords and is marked in red on the map. The cluster received the code name “esports” for the most significant keyword. This keyword is characterized by the presence of 239 links with other map words. The keywords of the cluster publications are centered around the very concept of “esports” with variants of its name such as “esports” (184), “electronic sport” (112), “video games”, “gaming” (109), “e-sport” (93), “computer games” (87), “video gaming” (81), “online gaming” (60), which indicates a significant number of publications devoted to the study of the very phenomenon of cybersport as a phenomenon examined from various angles, i.e. sports, social, economic, legal, psychological. Also, the keywords sports (167) and human computer interaction (148) have a significant weight in this cluster, which

can also be associated with consideration of human-computer interaction in the context of sports activities.

The second cluster contains 83 elements, the keyword “human” has the highest weight – 224, it is marked in green on the map. The most important keywords in this cluster are “male” (199), “female” (191), “athlete” (163), “controlled study” (161), “human experiment” (154), “physical activity” (139), “exercise” (118), “risk factor” (98), “training” (91). The cluster contains publications on the subject of targeted education and training in eSports, focuses on gender issues as well as athletes’ and players’ physical activity as a method of combating risk factors for their health.

The third cluster is formed around the keyword “video game” (198), it is marked in blue on the map and contains 43 elements. The keywords with the highest weight are “sport” (173), “adolescent” (128), “young adult” (125), “mental health” (102), “psychology” (101), “cognition” (87), “child” (79), “public health” (71), “sedentary behavior” (68), “health” (67). This cluster contains works devoted to the age characteristics of players in esports, issues of physical and mental health of both an individual and the population as a whole. Also, a significant number of publications are devoted to the psychological aspects of esports activities.

In the fourth cluster, the keyword “Internet” (91) has the highest weight, it is marked in yellow on the map and contains 23 elements. The following keywords have the highest weight in this cluster: “game addiction” (78), “cross-sectional study” (77), “gambling” (74), “addiction” (71), “behavior, addictive” (64), “prevalence” (63), “epidemiology” (62), “online game” (62), “social interaction” (54), “experience” (42), “gaming disorder” (42). These keywords clearly indicate that the publications are devoted to the study of various kinds of addictions and the negative impact of video and gambling on the behavior and socialization of people of all ages caused by interaction with gaming products on the Internet.

The fifth cluster is marked in purple on the map and contains 9 elements. It includes such keywords as “performance” (106), “competition” (105), “skill” (66), “emotion” (58), “motor performance” (41), “human-computer interaction” (30), “videogames” (21), “play” (19), “embodiment” (11). The publications included in this cluster are focused on the problem of achievements, increasing gaming and physical performance for successful participation in competitions.

Discussion

An analytical review of literary sources is the most important component of scientific research. It allows you to identify priority areas for the topic under consideration, to find out the main connections between its chief components.

The use of bibliometric methods for processing the received information takes such an analysis to a qualitatively new level (He Q., 1999; Smith LC, 1981). This is due to the possibility of creating and visualizing bibliometric networks. This is exactly what VOSviewer 1.6.18 is used for – a software tool for building and visualizing such networks (VOSviewer version 1.6.18., 2021). The legitimacy and effectiveness of using this program have been proven in the analysis of priority scientific areas in the study of sports dances (Podrihalo O. et al., 2022), kickboxing (Podrigalo L. et al., 2022), the use of physical rights and physical activity in patients with Alzheimer’s disease (Iermakov et al., 2022) and NPP operation safety analysis (Khakymova et al., 2020).

The scientometric database Scopus was chosen due to the fact that it is one of the most authoritative tools in the scientific world. This significantly improves the quality of the information on the analyzed articles.

The analysis of articles from three scientometric databases made it possible to identify the most popular and promising areas of research in the field of esports. Articles from the categories “Sport Sciences”, “Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism”, “Communication”, “Psychology Multidisciplinary” were of the greatest interest to our study. According to clustering data, they can be divided into certain groups: 1) the study of the phenomenon of esports as a multi-faceted phenomenon; 2) the process of learning and training in esports, increasing gaming and physical performance for successful participation in competitions; 3) health problems of players and esportsmen; 4) physical training of esportsmen; 5) study of the influence of computer games on one’s psychomotor abilities; 6) gender and age characteristics of esports activities; 7) social networks and media performing a communication and information function; 8) psychological aspects of esports.

Study of the esports phenomenon as a multi-faceted phenomenon

An analysis of the keywords that had the highest weight in search queries in all three scientometric databases indicates a variety of options for the existence of the very concept of “esports” or “e-sport”, namely “video games”, “electronic sport”, “computer games”, “online gaming”. At the same time, in a number of cases, scientists regard the esports and competitive aspect of esports as an object of study, and players as athletes. Another category of research concerns the study of social, psychological, and economic characteristics of activities performed by the players who devote a significant part of their time to gaming activities with different motivations: pleasure, communication, financial rewards, etc., but are not members of any professional esports society. Also, at the same time, the concepts of an esports athlete and a gamer are formulated and justified as fundamentally different categories, since for esports athletes esports is

a professional activity, and gamers are positioned as amateur, not professional players. The proof of this statement is the work that studies the changes in physiological parameters of esports athletes and amateur players (Zimmer et al., 2022).

Cranmer et al. (Cranmer et al., 2022) proposed an esports matrix of four different areas that distinguish esports: esports as a representation of current physical sports (sports digitalization), esports as a traditional (multiplayer) gaming experience (competitive multiplayer), computer changing existing sports, rules and player customization through digital augmentations (enhanced digital sports), as well as new types of esports using new technologies such as virtual and augmented reality (immersive sports). The esports matrix has been developed on the basis of industry experience to validate its suitability and relevance to improve its conceptual and empirical understanding and, importantly, to promote a more structured approach to enable businesses to realize the potential of esports.

A significant amount of research, especially from the earlier period, focused on the issue of the legitimacy of classifying the video game player activity as a sports category (Adamus, 2012; Hilvoorde, 2022; Jenny et al., 2017; Hallmann & Giel, 2018). The work of Pase et al., Pack & Hedlund (Pase, 2020; Pack & Hedlund, 2020) analyzes the possibilities and legitimacy of including esports in the program of the Olympic Games.

The authors propose to classify games according to the features of game mechanics, genres, methods of interaction between players and their number, while highlighting those that meet the requirements of esports – the competitive component, the dependence of the result on the skills and abilities of the players, the minimum amount of randomness in the competition process (Imas, 2021).

This category includes articles devoted to the historical processes of development and formation of esports, both in general and individual game genres and products (Adamus, 2012; Hamari & Sjöblom, 2017).

While digital games provide a very compelling experience, the nature of this interaction is not clear enough. A descriptive review (Connolly et al., 2012) explores aspects related to digital game engagement. A number of studies have been identified that have examined various aspects of game involvement, including subjective experience while playing, physiological concomitant experiences, motives for playing, game use and time spent playing, and the impact of playing on life satisfaction. A study of work over the past 10 years has revealed the complex, multifactorial nature of participation in digital entertainment games. The range of games and gaming platforms available is ever-expanding, and like many other enjoyable activities, gaming can easily backfire as attraction becomes habitual or even addictive. The authors urge to maintain a delicate balance between positive and negative experiences, emotions and motives for attracting players to games.

In their article, Murray et al. (Murray et al. 2022) introduced and built the term 'esports diplomacy', its definition and benefits. Esports diplomacy can be defined as conscious, strategic and regular use of diplomatic techniques, skills and functions to inform and create a favourable image among the general public, states, and organisations so as to shape their perceptions in a way that is (more) conducive to the esports industry's desired goals. According to the authors, the use of such an approach will help to deal with such negative aspects of esports as illegitimacy, breaches of integrity, lack of diversity, cheating, corruption, and the encroachment of more powerful players into the esports realm.

Process of learning and training in esports, increasing game and physical productivity for successful participation in competitions

Research on ways to improve the gaming skills and efficiency of esports players leads to the need of studying the factors that determine them. These factors include primarily psychomotor abilities, cognitive functions, sensorimotor reactions of players. Researchers argue that there is a connection between individual manifestations of these abilities and the ability to solve game problems with maximum speed and efficiency.

Previous research has shown that experienced video game players outperform amateurs in a variety of cognitive and perceptual tasks, including visual selective attention (Green & Bavelier, 2003, 2006; Dye et al., 2009; Spence & Feng, 2012; Leg; Belchior et al. , 2013; Achtman et al., 2008), visual search performance (Castel et al., 2005), contrast sensitivity (Lee & Schoenstedt, 2011) (Green et al., 2010), cognitive flexibility (Colzato et al. 2006, 2010; Leigh & Clark, 2023), visual short-term memory (Boot et al. Bavelier, 2006; Spencer-Smith & Klingberg, 2017) and multisensory integration (Di Luzio et al., 2021).

Esports players must anticipate the opponent's stimulus and respond to it as quickly and accurately as possible by manipulating the human-computer interface. Developed perceptual-motor abilities are essential for success in esports, since successful keyboard and mouse control is one of the most important winning factors (Piatysotska et.al., 2023). Playing computer games requires higher skills in perception, attention, cognitive functions and fine motor skills (Pluss et al., 2020).

According to the authors (Toth et al., 2021), among many perceptual-motor skills, waiting time, eye-hand coordination and peripheral perception (field of vision) are of crucial importance for e-sportsmen. Since esports requires more precise and faster movements, professional players often spend significant time training and competing in order to get the best results. Studies have shown that perceptual-motor skills can be improved through experience and practice, which is proportional to the time spent on purposeful practice (Toth et al., 2021; Dylan R Poulus et al., 2022).

The study (Kim H. et al., 2022) was aimed at exploring the differences between professional and amateur esports athletes in perceptual-motor abilities. In particular, perceptual-motor skills were assessed in relation to waiting time, eye-hand coordination and peripheral perception, which are closely related to the results of esports. Professional esports players demonstrated better latency and peripheral perception (wider field of view in degrees) than amateurs.

A study by Kim & Thomas (Kim & Thomas, 2015) found that professional esports athletes practice at least 10 hours a day, including game plans, strategy, and individual performances. In addition to training cognitive skills, physical demands should not be underestimated (Railsback & Caporusso, 2019).

In their study, Neri et al. (Neri et al., 2021) determined that video games can have a beneficial effect on cognitive functioning and demonstrated how a personalized/adaptive first-person shooter (FPS) experience can greatly accelerate the learning process of video game players. The authors also present a training program to improve shooting skills in CS:GO, expanding the understanding of the means and methods of sports training in esports.

The scientists' attention is also attracted by technical equipment in esports. In their research, Conroy et al. (Conroy et al., 2021) studied the impact of changing the characteristics of esports equipment on the performance of players. It has been found that, in combination, using a lighter mouse with lower sensitivity can improve in-game target acquisition performance.

A study by Pradhan & Abdourazakou (Pradhan & Abdourazakou, 2020) aimed to create a power rating model for seasonal performance in the popular MOBA video game, Dota 2. The hybrid analysis results are consistent with other forms of performance evaluation such as Elo and Glicko ratings. Regarding the best teams, the proposed rating system allows to more accurately reflect the actual situation in the season compared to other methods.

In their study, Pluss et. al. (Pluss et al., 2022) found differences in the training behavior of professional and semi-professional esportsmen in Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (males aged $23,76 \pm 2,88$ years). Professional and semi-professional esportsmen performed on average $30,9 \pm 8,2$ and $24,7 \pm 3,6$ hours of general game practice per week, respectively, $19,6 \pm 6,9$ and $15,0 \pm 2,7$ hours of competitive practice, respectively. In particular, professional esportsmen trained $6,6$ ($SE=2,2$) hours more per week than semi-professional players, out of which $4,8$ ($SE=1,8$) hours were spent on competition practice.

Seya & Shinoda (Seya & Shinoda, 2016) investigated the effects of first-person shooter (FPS) experience and training on cognitive performance. Participants completed tasks to determine the useful field of view (UFOV), working visual memory (VWM), and reaction time (RT). The experiment showed that FPS players performed better in all cognitive tasks than players of other genres. The

results obtained indicate that FPS play experience and/or training can improve cognitive performance for at least UFOV, VMW and RT.

Physical preparation of esportsmen

The content of esportsmen's physical readiness is determined by the nature of their training and competitive activities. During the competition, the athlete is in a forced sitting position, and purposeful motor actions are performed only with the fingers of the hand. A long stay in a sitting position requires the development of general endurance and static strength endurance of the muscles of the back and neck, as well as coordination abilities, which act as an integrating element. Controlling a virtual object (game character) with the help of a keyboard and a computer mouse requires the manifestation of accuracy of movements and speed of decision-making. Effective interaction with the keyboard and mouse is achieved due to the formed motor memory, proprioceptive and muscle sensitivity, accuracy of movements (Toth et. al., 2021).

Forced posture is characteristic of all cyberdisciplines, yet the optimal degree of development of reaction speed, motor memory, proprioceptive and muscle sensitivity may not be needed in some cyberdisciplines (Schary et al., 2022). For example, in *Hearthstone: Heroes of Warcraft* the control of the game is carried out mainly with the mouse at a low speed of the gameplay. In the *Counter-Strike: Global Offensive* discipline, on the contrary, the requirements for speed and accuracy of movements are very high. Therefore, the development of general and static strength endurance is the basis of general physical training (GPT), and the development of reaction speed, movement accuracy, motor memory, proprioceptive and muscle sensitivity, movement accuracy – special physical training (SPT) (Baumann et. al., 2022).

Separate studies provide a body of empirical data on the training routines of elite esports athletes, with a particular focus on their physical performance. Kari & Karhulahti (Kari & Karhulahti, 2014, 2016) present a study of the training system of elite esports athletes, with a particular focus on exercise programs. The study is based on a sample of 115 elite esports players. According to the survey data, esports athletes train approximately 5.28 hours daily throughout the year at a high level. Approximately 1.08 hours of this workout is exercise. Over half (55.6%) of elite esports athletes believe that integrating exercise into their training programs has a positive impact on esports performance, however, at least 47% of elite esports athletes engage in physical activity primarily to maintain overall health. Accordingly, the study indicates that elite esports athletes are also active athletes, individuals aged 18 and over who exercise almost three times as much as the daily recommendation of 21 minutes of activity provided by the World Health Organization.

The only work in the aforesaid area comes from the research by Hebbel-Seeger (Hebbel-Seeger, 2012). He cites a study by the esports organization ESL (Electronic Sports League), which apparently released an unpublished German thesis written by Luttmann in 2007. According to Hebbel-Seeger's study (Hebbel-Seeger, 2012), it is found that esports players are more active than the average population, and at least 95% of them are also involved in traditional sports.

The work by Emara (Emara et al., 2020) proposes a three-pronged framework for sports medicine professionals and coaches to provide a holistic approach to caring for an esports player. This esports framework includes awareness and management of common musculoskeletal and health hazards, health promotion opportunities, and recommendations for optimizing performance.

Esports has a huge potential for the development of physical activity programs and health promotion efforts. Ketelhut et al. (Ketelhut et al., 2021) presented the potential of esports to increase the physical activity, health and well-being of gamers and esports players, strategic and preventive solutions to mitigate possible adverse health effects of esports, the use of esports technologies (platforms, exergames, etc.) as an innovative health promotion tool, especially attracting gamers and esports players with engaging and interactive activities.

Study of the influence of computer games on the psychomotor abilities of a person

Computerized virtual reality scenarios are created in the context of training in various professional areas, such as airline pilots using flight simulators that reproduce real scenarios (Haslbeck et al., 2014), drones, or virtual training for surgeons (Carbone & Thomas, 2018). In this context, personalization of an exercise regimen tailored to the individual is critical and can be used to enhance specific cognitive performance in both healthy individuals and patients, with favorable outcomes in daily life (Klingberg et al., 2005; Jaeggi et al., 2008; Shinaver et al., 2014; Spencer-Smith and Klingberg, 2017).

In Stark et al. (Stark et al., 2021) it has been proven that at least some classes of games can improve memory function. In particular, playing immersive 3D games that provide a rich experience and novelty improves memory in hippocampal-dependent tasks. The study was conducted with the participation of middle-aged adults using the game Minecraft.

Carbone & Thomas present studies of the psychomotor skills of esports players with differentiation according to the way they interact with the computer interface and input means (mouse, keyboard or joystick). Analog controller use has been found to be highly correlated with gamers' developing psychomotor skills, indicating that repeating gameplay with analog controllers develops psychomotor skills to a greater extent than the same game time with a mouse/key-

board. A set of methods has been proposed for determining the visual-motor reaction time, tremor, keystroke frequency, measuring hand coordination using the Purdue Pegboard and Grooved Pegboard methods (Carbone & Thomas, 2018).

Carbone et al. (Carbone et al., 2016) found that the hand position when using a game controller is the same as during laparoscopic surgery, suggesting that experienced gamers may have psychomotor skills easily transferable to those of laparoscopic surgery. Robotic laparoscopic surgery involves a computer-controlled mechanical device that manipulates laparoscopic instruments. Unlike traditional laparoscopic surgery, the surgeon controls the robot and the robot manipulates the instruments. This is advantageous because the articulation possible with a mechanical robot is far superior to that of a human surgeon, resulting in finer and finer motion control. In particular, the thumb and forefinger of each hand are often used by the interaction control participant in both interface paradigms. Greater dexterity in the movements of these particular fingers gained through play may lead to an increased initial ability to successfully use the robotic laparoscopic interface. D. Stefanidis et al. showed that gross psychomotor skills account for the rate at which new surgeons acquire laparoscopic skills (Stefanidis et al., 2006). Miskry has shown that performance in the racing game Diddy Donkey Kong Racing on the Nintendo64 game console is highly correlated with performance in time trials on the Laparoscopic Skills Station (Miskry et al., 2002).

Previous research (Green & Bavelier, 2003, 2012) shows that action video games improve attentional resources, allowing gamers to better distribute their attention both in space and in time. To further characterize the plastic changes resulting from playing these video games, the authors (Dye et al., 2009) performed an Attention Network Test (ANT) on action game players and non-gamers. Its findings suggest that action video game players of all ages have improved attention skills, allowing them to respond to targets more quickly.

In the work of Green et al. (Green et al., 2010) action games have been shown to improve behavioral performance in a wide range of perceptual tasks, from those that require efficient allocation of attentional resources across a visual scene to those that require successful identification of fleeting stimuli. Importantly, these effects have not only been shown in experienced video game players, but a causal relationship has been established between playing video games and improved information processing through learning.

Understanding the neurological changes that occur as experiences develop is a central theme in both cognitive psychology and cognitive neuroscience. The authors (Campbell et al., 2018) argue that video games, despite previous misconceptions, are an excellent model environment allowing us to explore the development of neurocognitive experience. In their opinion, the area of esports is particularly relevant as it covers video / computer games at a competitive and

increasingly professional level. The sheer scale of participation, controlled environments, structured skill rankings, pervasive social nature, and large databases make esports a potentially very fertile research field to improve our understanding of the new era of athlete cognition.

Based on the results of the analysis of scientific sources, it was found that as far as the formation of psychomotor skills is concerned, scientists note a predominantly positive aspect of interaction with computer gaming devices. The negative consequences of such interaction are mainly in the medical and hygienic aspects associated with insufficient physical activity of esports activities, as well as the harmful effects of computer devices, especially with the systematic violation of the ergonomic conditions for their use. The negative consequences of esports activity are presented in the following subsection “Health problems of players and esportsmen”.

Health problems of players and esportsmen

At a professional level, esports has been proven to have a high potential for stress and is sometimes considered equivalent to traditional sports. While traditional sports promote health through muscle activity and increased energy expenditure, esports can be a purely sedentary activity that can have potentially harmful consequences if practiced regularly.

A significant number of works are devoted to the problem of health maintenance and prevention. The researchers note that, according to the specifics of their professional activities, esportsmen and gamers share similar categories of health risks with people whose professional activities are associated with long-term work at the computer.

The following main categories of diseases and injuries are distinguished (Emara et al., 2020): musculoskeletal pain in the back, neck, upper limbs, headache, cardiovascular diseases (Zimmer et al., 2022), dry eye syndrome, diseases of the gastrointestinal tract, obesity, chronic inflammatory diseases of the pelvic organs, diseases of the respiratory system, diseases of the veins of the lower extremities. Among professional esportsmen injuries, there are those that are associated with the functioning of the radiocarpal (hand, wrist) and elbow joints – tendinitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, tenosynovitis, de Quervain’s tenosinitis and cross syndrome, systematic microtraumas of tendons and ligaments (McGee C & Ho K, 2021). Among various risk factors one can identify physical inactivity, prolonged sitting, irregular meals and / or malnutrition, unventilated rooms and / or air-conditioned rooms, large crowds in a limited area, allergens (plastic, dust), irregular working hours, lack of sleep (Sanz-Milone et al., 2021), psychological and psycho-social factors, incorrect position of the legs when working at a computer (“foot to foot”), bad habits.

A number of occupational factors have been identified as contributing to an increased risk of upper limb tendinopathies, including repetitive or continued bending of the wrist, repeated twisting or absorbing movements, non-neutral wrist positions during work, and repetitive forceful movements (DiFrancisco-Donoghue et. al., 2019; Zwibel et. al., 2019).

Lam et. al. (Lam et al., 2022) analyzed the features of the work of mobile games players, also related to esports disciplines, but having a specific biomechanical structure. They found that the highest rates of symptom prevalence among professional mobile gamers were associated with pain in the neck (40%), fingers (38%), and head (32%), slightly different from those in computer gamers, i.e. neck (42%), back (42%), wrists (36%) and hand (32%) (Yin et al., 2020) and in sedentary office workers, i.e. the lower back (72%) and neck (55,2 %) (Rudolf et. al., 2020). Differences in rates of injury prevalence and localization may be related to the unique work environment and task intensity of mobile esports, which affect the fine tuning of postural control and postural adaptation and thus lead to the development of chronic injuries (Truong et. al., 2020).

In a study by Podrigalo L. et al. (Podrigalo, L. et al., 2020) it was found that excessive communication with computer games leads to endocrine system disorders, increased oxidative stress and the gradual formation of a prenosological state in children and adolescents, which was proven by the results of determining 10 biochemical parameters of saliva. Significant differences were established between the group of active players and children who did not have contact with games as far as DC, catalase activity, concentrations of SH groups, concentrations of glutathione, secretory IgA, adrenaline and serotonin were concerned. The concentration of DC in the group of active players was higher by 75.8%, catalase activity was 2.23 times lower, the concentration of SH groups was reduced by 32%, the concentration of glutathione was reduced by 73%, the level of secretory IgA was 40% lower, whereas the concentration adrenaline 2.3 times higher, and the concentration of serotonin 35.5% higher. Children-gamblers are also characterized by a decrease in nonspecific immunity due to a decrease in the concentration of secretory immunoglobulin A. The results of the study confirmed that a prenosological state of health is gradually forming in the group of active players. Characteristic manifestations of this condition are an imbalance in the LPO-AOS system, gradual depletion and disruption of protective antioxidant mechanisms, a decrease in the level of resistance, and an imbalance in the endocrine system. All these factors significantly reduce the reliability of body functioning and increase its vulnerability to adverse factors.

Influence of computer games on the psychological characteristics of players

A study by Garcia-Lanzo et. al. (García-Lanzo et al., 2020) has shown that competitiveness in esports is associated with different demands/stressors, psy-

chological and physiological stress responses, and the use of different coping strategies.

In their work, Poulus et. al. (Poulus et al., 2022) determined the psychological similarity between professional esportsmen and athletes of traditional sports, mainly team sports. It was found that the players used the same strategies to improve team cohesion, and interpersonal disputes were cited as one of the main problems.

Hong et. al. (Hong et. al., 2022) studied the relationship between satisfaction of basic needs that determine motivation and burnout among esports athletes. The results show that player competence has a negative relationship with self-determined motivation. It has been established that players do not associate an increased level of competence with their motivation. The results show that intrinsic motivation is negatively associated with elevation, especially exhaustion and decreased feelings of accomplishment. It should be noted that a high level of players' competence can lead to a decrease in self-motivation, which can lead to burnout.

An article by Bányai et. al. (Bányai et al., 2019), which is a systematic review, covers the main psychological aspects of esports as well as explores the similarities between esports and professional gambling. The authors singled out eight studies that explored three topics: the process of becoming an esports player, the characteristics of esports athletes such as intelligence, and motivation of esports viewers. These results draw attention to a new area of professional video game research and provide some insight into the psychology of esports athletes. The article also explores the similarities between esports athletes and professional players (and poker players in particular) in terms of the psychological vulnerability of esports athletes.

The basis of training in esports is the development of cognitive and physical skills, which an athlete combines to achieve complex strategic results. According to research, esports contributes to the development of player skills such as teamwork skills, systematic and strategic thinking, skills of orienting in virtual space, adaptation in situations of psychological stress, stress resistance, communication and language competencies.

Along with the problem of psychological dependence on games and their connection with aggression, the specifics of gamers' cognitive sphere are widely studied. Interaction with virtual images during the game involves a wide range of cognitive processes and can affect such cognitive characteristics of gamers as attention, memory, spatial perception, thinking, control and planning (Leis & Lautenbach, 2020).

It should be noted that in relation to the nervous system properties, the researchers did not reveal any similarities between the typological portraits of representatives of esports games and the portraits of representatives of traditional

sports. According to the research of F. Genov, the volitional qualities associated with the participants' performance in different classes of esports games also do not correlate with the leading qualities of athletes. All this points to the highest originality and originality of the considered types of virtual sports, asking for further research on the individual typological features of esports players.

In his work, Bonilla (Bonilla, 2022) studies the key psychological skills that affect the performance of esports players. It has been established that there are three main parameters that structure the players' optimal performance, namely: technical-tactical skills, psychological skills and healthy habits. Among psychological abilities, 8 components were identified: attention control, emotion control, activation control, communication, team cohesion, thought control, goal control and behavior control.

In the course of a study of gaming disorders among esports players as a potential risk of their activity, it was found (Bonkalo et al., 2022) that players who prefer the strategy genre are the least likely to escape from reality and take on a game role to express their emotions through the game, and in general have the lowest level of addiction to games. The risk of computer gaming disorders among esportsmen is largely determined by their sporting achievements, the type of sports activity (individual or team), and the genre of the computer game.

The limitations of this study are related to the fact that the analysis of articles focused on areas related to sports and its manifestations. At the same time, the number of publications found does not allow an analysis of other areas in this article.

Summary

An analytical analysis of publications devoted to esports in the Scopus bibliometric database was carried out. A fairly large number of works devoted to this problem has been selected. The largest number of works belongs to the following headings: Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism, Sport Sciences, Computer Science, Medicine, Social Sciences, Communication Health Professions Business, Management and Accounting, Psychology Multidisciplinary, Engineering, Arts and Humanities, Law, Mathematics, Decision Sciences. The vast majority of authors come from countries such as the United States, Spain, Australia, United Kingdom, Germany, the Russian Federation, Canada, China, Finland, Japan. Priority scientific directions in this area have been established and they include the phenomenon of e-sports as a multi-faceted phenomenon, the process of learning and training in esports, increasing gaming and physical performance for successful participation in competitions, health problems of players and esportsmen, physical training of esportsmen, study of the influence of playing computer

games on the psychomotor abilities of a person, gender and age characteristics of esports activities, social networks and media that perform a communication and information function, psychological aspects of esports. The analysis made it possible to identify a number of unsolved scientific problems in esports, which include: determination of the training features in esports and optimizing the training process, development of a methodology for predicting performance in esports, determination of professionally important qualities for players, building an esports professionogram, determination of esports players' skill levels according to a set of indicators of gaming efficiency and competitive activity, study of the influence of training and competitive loads on the functional state of esports athletes, study of possible ways of using esports in the training of military specialists in camera work. The very solution of these problems should become a priority scientific direction in further research.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Priority areas of scientific research in the field of esports: an analytical review based on publications in the scientometric database*.

FUNDING

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Priority areas of scientific research in the field of esports: an analytical review based on publications in the scientometric database*.

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CZĘŚĆ III

**UWARUNKOWANIA ZDROWIA, POSTAWY
PROZDROWOTNE, JAKOŚĆ ŻYCIA**

<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/sit.2023.04.07>

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Impact of Proprioceptive Training on Postural Stability in Adolescent Male Soccer Players: A Single Group Preliminary Study

How to cite [jak cytować]: Rutkowski, T. (2023). Impact of Proprioceptive Training on Postural Stability in Adolescent Male Soccer Players: A Single Group Preliminary Study. *Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe*, 6(4), 139–150.

Wpływ treningu proprioceptywnego na stabilność posturalną nastoletnich chłopców grających w piłkę nożną: badanie wstępne

Streszczenie

Piłka nożna jest jednym z najbardziej popularnych sportów zespołowych na świecie. Zarówno piłkarze amatorscy, jak i profesjonaliści narażeni są na wystąpienie kontuzji na treningach i meczach. W celu zmniejszenia tego ryzyka przeprowadzono badanie, które skupiło się na treningu poprawiającym stabilność posturalną, istotną dla zapobiegania kontuzjom sportowym. Badanie obejmowało 20 chłopców w wieku 14–15 lat, trenujących w profesjonalnym klubie piłkarskim. Średni wzrost badanych wynosił 172,0 cm, a masa ciała 58,5 kg. Interwencja polegała na dodatkowych treningach, które odbywały się dwa razy w tygodniu przez okres trzech miesięcy, z wykorzystaniem platformy Delos Postura Proprietary System. Pojedynczy trening trwał 15 minut. W ramach badania piłkarze przeszli test „RIVA”, który obejmował ocenę stabilności posturalnej z zamkniętymi i otwartymi oczami przed oraz po przeprowadzonej interwencji. Wyniki wykazały istotną statystycznie poprawę w obu próbach, odpowiednio 4,3% i 2,1%. Porównując te wyniki

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z innymi badaniami, można sądzić, że dodatkowy trening w takiej formie może przyczynić się do zmniejszenia liczby kontuzji, szczególnie wśród młodych piłkarzy.

Słowa kluczowe: piłka nożna, stabilność posturalna, zapobieganie urazom, platforma Delos, młodzi sportowcy.

Abstract

Football is one of the most popular team sports globally. Both amateur and professional footballers face the risk of injuries during training and matches. To mitigate this risk, a study was conducted focusing on training to improve postural stability – a crucial element in sports injury prevention. The study involved 20 boys aged 14–15 years, training at a professional football club, with a mean height of 172 cm and a body weight of 58.5 kg. The intervention comprised additional training sessions held twice a week over three months, utilizing the Delos Postural Proprietary System platform. Each training session lasted 15 minutes. As part of the study, the footballers underwent the 'RIVA' test, assessing postural stability with eyes closed and open before and after the intervention. The results revealed a statistically significant improvement in both trials, 4.3% and 2.1%, respectively. When compared with findings from other studies, it is reasonable to conclude that this form of additional training may contribute to a reduction in injuries, especially among young football players.

Keywords: football, postural stability, injury prevention, Delos platform, adolescent athletes.

Introduction

Football is currently one of the most popular sports globally, with children all over the world being trained in it from an early age. It is an extremely complex sport that requires comprehensive preparation, encompassing more than just the development of physical fitness and improvement of technical skills (Basuki et al., 2021; Gioftsidou et al., 2012; Thorborg et al., 2017). In training, greater attention is being given to postural stability in various playing situations. Postural stability plays a crucial role in executing precise and ergonomic movements, maintaining balance, and preventing injuries (Cain et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2020).

A sports injury is defined as any tissue damage that occurs during sports training or competition. The most common criterion for diagnosing a sports injury is the need to miss at least one day of training or competition. The US National Sports Injury Recording System defines an injury as a 'documented injury' that limits the ability to train or play for a minimum of 1 consecutive day and categorizes it into mild (1–7 days), moderate (8–21 days), and severe (more than 21 days). The concept of sports injuries differs from standard injuries in that professional athletes are considered healthy only when they can perform at their best during competition or training. In contrast, non-professional athletes are generally considered healthy if they can perform their daily activities without limitations. The accurate count of sports injuries is often difficult to estimate

as it depends on various factors such as motivation, prompt consultation and injury documentation by a physiotherapist or doctor, the athlete's and coach's level of awareness (Emery & Pasanen, 2019; Sivaratnam et al., 2021; Sprouse et al., 2020). According to a study conducted in England, which involved 243 players from 10 teams in the English professional league (EFL), 473 injuries were recorded during the 2015–2016 season, with an estimated incidence of 9.11 injuries per 1,000 hours of activity. Lower limb injuries accounted for 64.2% of the total, with the thigh area being the most common injury site at 31.7%, followed by the knee joint at 14.6% and the ankle joint at 13% (Jones et al., 2019).

One tool in the effort to reduce injuries during training and competition is the introduction of a training module dedicated to proprioceptive stimulation. Proprioception is the ability to receive signals from various sensory mechanoreceptors to determine the sense of body position and movement, encompassing aspects such as static position, displacement, velocity, acceleration, and muscle force or effort (Pfirrmann et al., 2016; Riemann & Lephart, 2002). It operates on the principle of neuromuscular feedback, with peripheral mechanoreceptors located in joint structures, muscle fibers, the retina, and the vestibular vagus. Sensory receptors responsible for proprioceptive functions are situated in various connective tissues, including the skin, ligaments, tendons (tendinous), joint capsules (articular), and skeletal muscles (muscular). The central component of this system includes key structures in the central nervous system, such as the spinal cord, midbrain, and cerebellum (Moon et al., 2021).

The Delos Postural Proprietary System (DPPS) was utilized as the primary measurement tool for assessing and training body stability. It comprises several instruments, including the Delos Balance Platform (DEB), Delos Postural Assistant (DPA), Delos Vertical Controller (DVC), and Postural System Manager (Delos PSM). This device is capable of evaluating both dynamic and static body stability, visualizing levels of proprioceptive control, and facilitating training to tackle diminished levels of stability. The platform was connected to a computer utilizing specialized software (DPPS). It consisted of an electronic cradle board, an electronic postural reader, an infrared sensor strip, and a display. The infrared sensor strip was equipped with sensors that could detect when the test subject made contact with it for support. The electronic postural reader, known as the Delos Vertical Controller (DVC), was positioned on the sternum and employed a two-dimensional accelerometer to measure trunk tilt in the frontal (x) and sagittal (y) planes. Additionally, an electronic platform called the Delos Rocking Board (DRB) was utilized, providing one degree of freedom in the frontal plane with a range of motion of $\pm 15^\circ$. The DRB measured the tilt of its movable plate. The research results were determined using the Stability Index value, which is calculated separately for trials with eyes open and eyes closed. High SI (Stability Index) values in EC (Eye Closed) tests are responsible for improving propriocep-

tive control and facilitating the expression of effective proprioceptive reflexes that swiftly stabilize the subject in response to vestibular stimuli. Lower SI values in EC studies may be associated with the vestibular system. However, regardless of the case, such values consistently indicate a more pronounced level of proprioceptive control (Labanca et al., 2021).

The study aimed to investigate the impact of proprioceptive training interventions conducted on the Delos platform on the postural stability of boys aged 14 to 15 engaged in soccer.

1. Material and methods

1.1. Participants and study design

The study was designed as a pre/post study, and the study protocol was approved a priori by the ethics committee at the Collegium Medicum of Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, Poland, under the reference number KE-O/61/2022 (approval date: 14.07.2022).

The research involved 20 boys, aged between 14 and 15, who were actively participating in organized football training at the Academy of Football in Poland. The study took place from July to October 2022 and was conducted within the premises of the RKS Raków High School of Sports Championships (Częstochowa, Poland). Throughout the research, the participants maintained their regular soccer training routine, which consisted of five training sessions per week and a weekly match. To be eligible for the study, the young soccer players needed to be injury-free in terms of muscle or bone injuries in the past year, ensuring they could fully participate in training and matches. Additionally, inclusion criteria required a minimum training attendance of 80% and a minimum training duration of three years.

1.2. Measurements

The study was conducted as a research experiment, with measurements taken before the intervention commenced and again immediately after its conclusion. Body height was measured to the nearest 0.5 centimeter using a height gauge, and body weight was obtained using a scale. Based on this data, BMI and the BMI centile were calculated, and the BMI percentile was determined using the reference charts by Niedźwiecka and Palczewska (Palczewska, Niedźwiecka, 1999).

Postural stability static RIVA test was conducted using the Delos platform, with individual assessments conducted for each lower limb, and each assessment comprising smaller components. Single-leg posture stability was evaluated

using the static single-leg posture test. During this test, the participant stood on one leg on a stable surface while a Stance Sensor (DVC) attached to the chest measured the degree of deviation in the X and Y axes. If the person lost their balance during the test and braced against the frame, an additional signal was sent to the Posture Assistant (DPA). The static RIVA test was performed under two conditions: with eyes closed (EC) and with eyes open (EO). The participant was barefoot and instructed to maintain an upright and still position on a stable wooden surface. No feedback was provided during the test regarding postural stability. Each test trial lasted for 20 seconds, followed by a 15-second rest period. The static single-leg posture test comprised six trials, alternating between the left and right limb, including two trials with EO and four trials with EC. The average value of all variables was calculated from both limbs. A short questionnaire was administered to collect additional data, including information on age, training experience, medical history related to musculoskeletal injuries, and any medical or physiotherapeutic interventions received. Stability Index provides percentage values that reflect the state of proper balance. Higher Stability index values are associated with a reduced likelihood of future injuries. A score above 70% signifies a low risk of injury in the future, while a score below 40% indicates a high risk.

1.3. Proprioceptive training

Proprioceptive training, in addition to basic soccer training, was conducted as part of the intervention. This supplementary training took place twice a week over three months, utilizing the Delos Postural Proprietary System platform, with each session lasting 15 minutes. The study group received an additional proprioceptive module during these sessions, focusing on re-educating trunk stability through dynamic postural control exercises on the DEB platform. Each exercise targeted the lower limbs and included three exercises performed in two series, with a 30-second duration for each exercise and a 20-second break between them. There was a 60-second break between particular series. The first exercise required subjects to maintain a stable torso posture, preventing off-axis excursions, measured using the DVC, with real-time feedback visible on a monitor. The second exercise aimed to control foot pivots on the DEB platform, emphasizing a range of foot pronation and supination up to 4 degrees. The third exercise combined maintaining a stable trunk and foot pivot, integrating elements from the first two exercises.

1.4. Data analysis

The analysis of the results was conducted using JASP (Jeffreys's Amazing Statistics Program) v0.17.1 (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands). Descrip-

tive statistics were performed to assess participant characteristics. Normality distribution tests, specifically the Shapiro-Wilk test, guided the selection of a test for within-group comparisons. The paired *t* test and the Wilcoxon test were subsequently applied. Cohen's *d* was used as the effect size for the paired *t* test, while matched rank biserial correlations served as the effect size for the Wilcoxon test. The level of statistical significance was set at $\alpha < 0.05$.

2. Results

Twenty boys with a mean age of 14.45 were studied. Their mean body height was 172 cm and body weight 58.5 kg. From these data, BMI (mean 19.6) and BMI centile (mean 48.3) were obtained. The football players had average training experience of 5.6 years. The study group demonstrated homogeneity in all measured parameters, except for age, as confirmed by the results of the Shapiro-Wilk test ($p < 0.05$).

Table 1
Participants characteristics, mean (SD)

Variable	Overall
<i>n</i>	20
Age, years	14.45 ± 0.5
Body mass, kg	58.5 ± 10.0
Body height, cm	172.0 ± 9.8
Training experience, years	5.6 ± 1.4
Body mass index, kg/cm ²	19.6 ± 1.6
BMI Centile	48.3 ± 19.5

BMI: Body Mass Index, SD: Standard Deviation.

After the intervention, the following changes were observed in the study group. In the EO trial (Table 2, Figure 1A), improvements were observed in the players' right stability at 2.1%, with a median increase of 1.9%. A decrease in the standard deviation by 23.2% was also observed. In the closed-eye (EC) trial (Table 2, Figure 1B), scores improved by an average of 4.3% and the median increased by 3.5%. A 26.7% decrease in the standard deviation was also observed. This sample also saw a much greater improvement of 3.59 in EC scores than of 1.86 in the EO group. The improvement was seen, by as much as 93% in favor of the EC sample. In the subjective assessment of postural stability (Table 2, Figure 1C), the participants rated an improvement in their stability by 59.2% where the median improved by 100%. Statistically significant changes were observed in all

trials performed. The standard deviation decreased by 50.4%. Correlations were also performed in an attempt to test the relationship between training experience, body weight, body height, and the effect of the intervention. These showed no statistically significant correlations.

Table 2
Intervention results of primary and secondary outcomes

Variable	Statistics	Baseline	Post-intervention	Mean difference	Effect size (95% CI)	P value
EO	Mean (SD)	89.87 (2.67)	91.73 (2.05)	1.86	-1.14 (-1.70 - -0.56)	<0.001 ^a
	Median [IQR]	90.55 [2.50]	92.25 [3.50]			
EC	Mean (SD)	84.43 (4.35)	88.02 (3.19)	3.59	-1.34 (-1.94 -- 0.72)	<0.001 ^a
	Median [IQR]	85.50 [2.85]	88.45 [3.05]			
SS	Mean (SD)	3.55 (1.19)	5.65 (0.59)	2.10	-1.00 (-1.00 - -1.00)	<0.001 ^b
	Median [IQR]	3.00 [2.00]	6.00 [1.00]			

EO: Eyes Opened; EC: Eyes Closed; SS: Subjective Stability; SD: Standard deviation; IQR: Interquartile range; ^a according to Wilcoxon test; ^b according to paired *t* test.

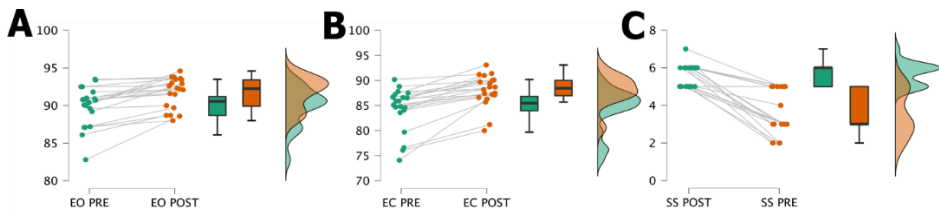


Figure 1
Raincloud plots for (A) eyes opened, (B) eyes closed, and (C) subjective stability

3. Discussion

This study aimed to examine the effect of proprioceptive training interventions carried out on the Delos platform on the postural stability of 14-15 year-old boys playing soccer. The intervention resulted in statistically significant improvements in postural stability, as assessed by the 'Riva' test after a 3-month training period. These improvements were observed in both the Eyes Open and Eyes Closed tests, indicating enhanced proprioceptive strategies and reduced visual dependence, irrespective of the subjects' level of motor training.

The results also indicated statistically significant differences in the subjective assessment of postural stability, suggesting a potential reduction in injuries among athletes. This is supported by a study conducted with the same research and training tool by Riva et al. The study, lasting six years and involving 55 professional basketball team players, demonstrated a remarkable 81% reduction in the incidence of ankle sprains from the first two years to the last two years of the study ($P < 0.001$). Similar reductions were observed for lower back pain, with a 77.8% decrease ($P < 0.005$). Although the reduction in knee sprains was 64.5% (not statistically significant), the comparison of the fourth and sixth year of the study with the level of new athletes showed a significant 72.2% improvement in proprioceptive control ($P < 0.001$). Riva et al.'s study indicated that improvements in proprioceptive control were significantly greater in the last two years of the study compared to new athletes, highlighting the substantial benefits of long-term proprioceptive training on postural stability. These findings suggest that improved proprioceptive control is a crucial factor in effectively reducing the risk of ankle sprains, knee sprains, and lower back pain (Riva et al., 2016).

Improvements in neuromuscular control can also be achieved through strength training. A study by Sihyun Yoo et al. examined the effects of two different training forms on center of pressure (COP) deflections. The study involved thirty-six taekwondo athletes who were divided into three groups: a control group, a group with additional proprioceptive exercises, and a group with strength training. Measurements were taken using a Kistler platform. The results indicated a reduction in COP excursions in both the proprioceptive and strength training groups compared to the control group. Both strength training and proprioceptive training have positive effects on enhancing body balance. Strength training reinforces muscles, leading to greater stability, improved movement control, and better postural maintenance. In contrast, proprioceptive training hones cognitive abilities and the interaction of the neuromuscular system, facilitating improved posture and balance control in dynamic sports situations. Each type of training offers unique advantages and can be effectively incorporated into training programs, depending on the goals and needs of the athletes (Yoo et al., 2018). Proprioceptive training can be valuable not only in reducing the risk of injury but also as an effective component of rehabilitation. This is supported by the results of a study conducted by Ben Moussa Zouita et al., in which patients recovering from an ankle sprain participated in three workouts per week for eight weeks. The study revealed a statistically significant improvement in proprioception tests, suggesting the potential to break the cycle of recurrent sprains in the future (Ben Moussa Zouita et al., 2013). Postural stability training can also benefit seniors. In a study conducted by Riva et al., a six-week, twice-weekly postural training intervention was administered to a group of 61 individuals aged 65-85 years. The subjects were stratified by gender and assigned to

three training groups: proprioceptive training, treadmill training, and a control group. In both men and women, statistically significant changes were observed in the Stability Index test during both closed-eye and open-eye trials (Riva et al., 2019). Ojeda et al. investigated the effect of proprioceptive training as an injury prevention tool in football. The authors conducted an analysis of 11 scientific papers that focused on football and one of the following keywords: proprioceptive training, balance training, neuromuscular training, or postural control training. The results of the systematic review indicate that proprioceptive training is effective in reducing the risk of injury in football, particularly for knee and ankle injuries. The authors believe that this additional training module is valuable and should be introduced into football training due to its effectiveness, ease of application, and relatively short duration (15-20 minutes) (Ojeda et al., 2019).

Furthermore, it is essential to emphasize that despite the positive effects of proprioceptive training on postural stability, it does not guarantee injury prevention. Sports injuries often result from various factors, including training load, insufficient rest, improper movement patterns, and external factors such as playing field conditions. Therefore, a comprehensive approach to injury prevention is advisable, with proprioceptive training serving as just one tool to reduce injuries. Future research should also consider these aspects and focus on understanding how proprioceptive training can be most effectively integrated into an overall training program for young footballers. This would help determine the optimal training conditions, including frequency, intensity, and the selection of proprioceptive exercises tailored to the needs and skills of the athletes.

3.1. Limitations

One limitation of this study is the absence of a control group. The effects of proprioceptive training would be easier to evaluate if they could be compared to a second group that solely participated in regular soccer training without the additional proprioceptive training module. Another limitation is the group's size. With a larger number of subjects, it might be possible to use different statistical analyses. In future research projects, it would be advisable to consider the inclusion of other forms of neuromuscular control testing for comparison with the results obtained from the Delos platform, such as Kistler platform testing or the star excursion balance test.

Conclusions

The study's results demonstrate improved postural stability in the tested football players in both the closed-eye and open-eye tests. This enhancement has the potential to contribute to both injury reduction and performance im-

provement. Therefore, it is worth considering the introduction of a proprioceptive module as an addition to standard soccer training in both amateur and professional clubs.

STATEMENT OF ETHICS

This study was conducted in accordance with the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki. The study protocol was reviewed and approved by bioethics committee of the Collegium Medicum of Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa (KE-O/61/2022, Częstochowa, Poland). All participants provided written informed consent to participate in this study.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The author declared no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Impact of Proprioceptive Training on Postural Stability in Adolescent Male Soccer Players: A Single Group Preliminary Study*.

FUNDING

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Impact of Proprioceptive Training on Postural Stability in Adolescent Male Soccer Players: A Single Group Preliminary Study*.

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CZĘŚĆ IV
TURYSTYKA I REKREACJA

<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/sit.2023.04.08>

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Hitchhiking: history, digitalisation and the future after the COVID-19 pandemic

How to cite [jak cytować]: Sienkiewicz, W., Adamiak, C. (2023). Hitchhiking: history, digitalisation and the future after the COVID-19 pandemic. *Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe*, 6(4), 153–175.

Autostop: historia, cyfryzacja i przyszłość po pandemii COVID-19

Streszczenie

Autostop ma długą historię jako forma turystyki alternatywnej. Doświadcza w ostatnich latach poważnych przemian w wyniku ogólnej cyfryzacji podróży i kultury. Podobnie jak inne formy mobilności, na podróże autostopem wpłynęła pandemia COVID-19 i niefarmaceutyczne regulacje mające na celu powstrzymanie rozprzestrzeniania się wirusa. W artykule w pierwszej kolejności zdefiniowano autostop jako zjawisko społeczne oraz przedstawiono jego historię z perspektywy globalnej i polskiej. Następnie omówiono obecny stan i możliwości rozwoju kultury autostopu. Dokonano w tym celu, po pierwsze, przeglądu prezentacji autostopu we współczesnej kulturze popularnej, zwłaszcza w kulturze internetowej, a po drugie, pogłębionych wywiadów z pięcioma młodymi, ale doświadczonymi autostopowiczami. Wywiady przeprowadzono w czasie obowiązywania restrykcji związanych z pandemią. Wywiady skupiają się na trzech głównych tematach: współczesnych wyzwaniach autostopu, wykorzystaniu ITC (technologii informacyjnych i komunikacyjnych)

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oraz podróżowaniu autostopem w czasie pandemii. Wyniki wskazują na ewolucję autostopu jako zjawiska społecznego, w którym dziedzictwo kulturowe alternatywnych stylów życia przeplata się z rosnącą rolą Internetu i komunikacji mobilnej. W podsumowaniu postulujemy dalsze badania, w tym zastosowanie nowych podejść metodologicznych i stawianie pytań badawczych dotyczących m.in. utowarowienia turystyki, znaczenia reputacji w Internecie oraz interakcji między autostopowiczami, mieszkańcami i kierowcami.

Słowa kluczowe: autostop, turystyka alternatywna, pandemia COVID 19, ICT (technologie informacyjne i komunikacyjne).

Abstract

Hitchhiking has a long history as a form of alternative tourism and has experienced significant transformations in recent years due to the overall digitalisation of travel and culture. Similarly to other forms of mobilities, it was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and non-pharmaceutical interventions aiming to stop the disease. The paper first defines hitchhiking as a social phenomenon and outlines its history from global and Polish perspectives. Then, it discusses the current developments and possible futures of hitchhiking culture. It is based first on the outline of the location of hitchhiking in contemporary popular culture, particularly Internet culture, and second on in-depth interviews with five young yet experienced lifestyle hitchhikers, performed during strict pandemic restrictions. The interviews focus on three major topics: modern challenges in hitchhiking, ITC (information and communication technologies) use, and hitchhiking during the pandemic. The results indicate the evolution of hitchhiking as a social phenomenon, where the cultural heritage of alternative lifestyles intertwines with the increasing role of the Internet and mobile communication. In conclusion, we postulate further studies, including applying new methodological approaches and asking research questions regarding, e.g. the commodification of tourism, the importance of web reputation, and interactions between hitchhikers, residents and drivers.

Keywords: hitchhiking, alternative tourism, COVID-19 pandemic, ICT (information and communication technologies).

Introduction

Hitchhiking as a means of transportation, a way of social contact, and a travelling lifestyle, has existed for a hundred years (Purkis, 2021; Schlebecker, 1958). Despite opinions on its decline in the last decades of the 20th century (Chesters & Smith, 2001; Garner, 2008), hitchhiking culture has survived and even revived around the world in recent decades (Kusiak, 2017; Mewes, 2016). Internet communication technologies provide a means to transfer hitchhiking know-how and communicate within the international travellers' community through social media, purpose-built platforms such as hitchwiki.org (Mewes, 2016) or travel blogs (Zhou, 2020). Moreover, new forms of collaborative mobility, somehow similar yet culturally distinctive from traditional hitchhiking, evolve with the growth of sharing economy (Shaheen & Cohen, 2013). Little is known, however, on how information and communication technologies (ICT) reshape the practices of hitchhiking against a historical backdrop.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020–2023 and non-pharmaceutical interventions employed to curb the spread of the disease have temporarily limited human mobility (Gössling et al., 2021; Seyfi et al., 2023) and will have a lasting impact on how people travel (Adamiak, 2023; Viana-Lora et al., 2023). Its influence on hitchhiking has not been examined. We can expect the scope and attractiveness of this activity to decline for some time due to fear of contact with strangers by both travellers and drivers (Bresciani et al., 2021; Shahabi et al., 2021). For that reason, a decrease in the use of ridesharing services was observed during the pandemic (Tan et al., 2022). However, the reactions to the pandemic differed within the tourist population depending on individual psychological and demographic characteristics, trip purpose and motivation (González-Reverté et al., 2022; Zentveld et al., 2022). Of various tourist groups, hitchhikers may particularly suit the description of crisis-resistant tourists as those “fitting the prototypical image of an adventure traveller, being more likely young, more extrovert, less agreeable, and willing to take high physical risks” (Hajibaba et al., 2015, p. 57). Such an assumption yet requires empirical verification.

The paper aims to contribute to the scarce literature on the contemporary dynamics of the hitchhiking culture, by exploring the modern transformation in the practices of hitchhiking that are occurring under the influence of first, the spread of the use of Internet communication, media and services, and second, the specific situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic. To achieve the aim, qualitative methodology and four sources of research material are used. The first one is the existing literary sources including books, research papers, grey literature such as conference reports and unpublished doctoral dissertations (Gokhale, 1997), and newspapers or magazines. The second source of information is media productions, including traditional media such as books, and movies, as well as new media (Listner et al., 2009) such as blogs, video streaming platforms and social media. As for the third source, five experienced hitchhikers, mostly from Poland, were interviewed. The topics raised during the conversation referred to their general and pandemic experience in hitchhiking, the use of information and communication technologies while travelling, and opinions on the future of hitchhiking. Finally, we employed autoethnography as a personal experience narrative (Butz & Besio, 2009) of the first author, an experienced hitchhiker and an active participant in the hitchhikers’ community.

The paper is organised as follows. The next chapter defines hitchhiking as a social phenomenon and outlines its history from global and Polish perspectives. The third chapter outlines the representation of hitchhiking in traditional and new media. Further, after presenting the profiles of the interviewees and the first author, we analyse the content of interview responses and personal experiences organised around three core topics: modern challenges in hitchhik-

ing, the use of ICT in hitchhiking, and hitchhiking during the pandemic. In the end, conclusions are presented.

The definition and history of hitchhiking

Defining hitchhiking

Although there is a general agreement on the meaning of the term “hitchhiking” (or “autostop” with slight spelling variations in most European languages), the precise definition of this social practice remains a challenge. A simple technical definition can be found e.g. in the Polish online dictionary: “travelling in cars stopped along the way” (*Słownik Języka Polskiego PWN*, 2020). According to the Cambridge online dictionary to hitchhike means “to get free rides in people’s vehicles by standing next to the road and waiting for someone to pick you up” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). Hitchwiki.org website, an important knowledge hub and communication platform for the international hitchhikers’ community defines this activity as “a form of transport where a traveller tries to catch a ride from another traveller, usually by car or truck, for free” (Hitchwiki, 2020).

Such purely technical definitions are often elaborated by focusing on the specifics of the relation between the driver and the hitchhiker. One of the popular Polish online dictionaries, *sjp.pl*, provides a relational definition of hitchhiking: “a form of travelling based on taking advantage of the kindness of accidentally encountered drivers” (*Słownik Języka Polskiego*, 2020) and another dictionary describes hitchhiking as a “courtesy lift by a car driver for a pedestrian traveller at the request signalled by him” (Kopaliński, 2000). In this understanding, the relation between a hitchhiker and a driver is a constituent element of this social phenomenon. The nature of this relation refers to the anthropology of gift economy (Mauss, 2002), where goods and services are given away freely under the assumption that receivers would pass the gift on, e.g. by lifting another hitchhiker in the future (Mewes, 2016). It is also understood that the driver’s gratification is the company and conversation with the traveller (Purkis, 2021).

Yet another approach to defining hitchhiking is to highlight personal motivations and meanings ascribed to this activity. Zhou (Zhou, 2020) describes hitchhiking as a form of lifestyle mobility and a means of self-expression. Here, this activity is closely related to forms of independent and budget travel often labelled as backpacking (Uriely et al., 2002). It can be traced back to Cohen’s (Cohen, 1972) non-institutionalised tourists, particularly drifters who “venture furthest away from the beaten track” (p. 168) and prefer the company of local people rather than other tourists. Therefore, hitchhiking is often treated not only as a means of transportation but also as a set of personal attitudes and travel be-

haviour, closely related to other forms of “slow”, “independent” or “niche” mobility including long-distance cycling, sailing and hiking (Random Roads, 2023.; O’Regan, 2012). Social and “budget” mobility extends to other elements of travel behaviour including accommodation, hence a particularly close association of hitchhiking with the use of the Couchsurfing platform and other social hospitality networks in recent decades (O’Regan, 2012; Karakan et al., 2021; Niezgodna & Kowalska, 2018).

History of hitchhiking in the world

Modern hitchhiking is usually historically associated with tramping and train hopping practised by vagabonds in the 19th and early 20th century USA (Schlebecker, 1958; Garner, 2008). The first media account of a hitchhiking trip may be a description of Charles Brown Jr’s 800-mile travel from Fort Wayne to New York, described in the *New York World Journal* (Purkis, 2021). In the 1920s the universal thumb signal was already used in America, and over the next decades, a specific hitchhikers’ lore was produced and expanded beyond the USA, first to Western Europe (McGuire, 2017; Mukerji, 1978). Until the middle of the 20th century, hitchhiking was widely practised as a means of transportation by students, soldiers, and job seekers in the USA, Europe and other parts of the world (Schlebecker, 1958).

At the end of the 1940s, the first signs of the numeric decline in hitchhiking were observed, first in the USA. It was caused on the one hand by growing car ownership, also among the young generation, and on the other hand by an increasing worry about the safety of this practice, fuelled by media accounts of crimes committed by, or to hitchhikers, and following anti-hitchhiking campaigns of automobile clubs and police, or even outlawing hitchhiking in some parts of the USA. In Europe, the popularisation of car ownership lagged behind North America, but similarly, together with the erosion of social trust and cultural transformation towards commodified leisure, economic individualism and “reaction against anyone perceived as a hippyish freeloader” (Poundland & Peston, 2009), it led to the drop in the popularity of hitchhiking in the 1970s and 1980s (Chesters & Smith, 2001). Still, parallel to the numeric decline, hitchhiking gained its own social, cultural and even political value associated with counter-cultural movements of beatniks and hippies associated with the ideas of peace, no violence, mutual help and opposition to mainstream consumerism (McGuire, 2017; O’Regan, 2012).

Nowadays, even though not mass-represented, the tradition of hitchhiking lives in Europe as a genre of alternative tourism and counter-cultural lifestyle mobility. There is a lively community organised around events and hitchhiking races (where participants hitchhike individually, yet simultaneously between

predefined places, and then participate in a social event at the final point) (Kusiak, 2017; Mewes, 2016; O'Regan, 2012). Since the beginning of the Internet era, numerous online communities uniting people internationally were established, such as web portals, blogs, social media groups and wiki pages (Chesters & Smith, 2001; Zhou, 2020), and these new opportunities for contact led to the renaissance of interest in and knowledge about this activity (Mewes, 2016). Hitchhiking, often described as an American invention that expanded to Western Europe (Schlebecker, 1958), has a long and rich history in the former Communist block of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Mewes, 2016; O'Regan, 2012), but also gains popularity outside of the Western World, e.g. in China (Zhou, 2020).

History of hitchhiking in Poland

The focus of the paper's empirical material on the cases of Polish hitchhikers makes it necessary to outline the historical context of thumb travel in Poland. This country is considered the first and only one where hitchhiking was once officially regulated and supported by the state (Czupryński, 2005; Garner, 2008; Keck-Szajbel, 2011). Later, this social practice experienced transformations similar to those happening in Western Europe but still exists as a form of niche tourism (Babiarz et al., 2019; Czupryński, 2005; Kusiak, 2017).

In the aftermath of World War II, communist governments saw the promotion of youth tourism as a promising way to legitimise the new borders of Poland: eastern parts of the pre-war territory had been joined to the Soviet Union, while former German territories in the west had been incorporated to Poland, and mass visits to these areas would help to genuinely "nationalise" them (Keck-Szajbel, 2011). Shortage of cars and public transportation equipment helped to accept the adaptation of a practice based on the principles of personal freedom and rooted in American tradition, so apparently non-compliant with the totalitarian regime in the Cold War era. Organised hitchhiking started in 1958, as a bottom-up initiative of the "Dookoła Świata" ("Around the World") youth travel magazine, supported by the Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society (PTTK), which gained acceptance of police authorities. Participants in the action had to purchase a hitchhiker's booklet which served as an identity document, a proof of insurance and contained coupons for the drivers. Coupons were given to drivers, who, after collecting a certain amount, could participate in lotteries and win prizes such as washing machines or even a car. During the first 10 years of legal hitchhiking in Poland, about 400,000 travellers, including foreigners mostly from other Eastern Bloc countries, participated in the action (Żyliński, 2010). With time, hitchhiking booklets became less popular, and hitchhiking suffered a similar crisis as in Western European countries.

After the democratic transformation of the late 1980s, regulated hitchhiking was discontinued, yet hitchhiking is still being practised, as evidenced by the English version of the Hitchwiki.org portal, which describes Poland as “an awesome country for hitchhiking and even one of the most hitchhiker-friendly countries in whole Europe” (Hitchwiki, 2023). Authors stress the role of hitchhiking tradition in the current attitude towards this form of travelling, “Many drivers generally believe that others do not stop and that hitchhiking days are over in Poland [...]. From 1958 till the beginning of the ‘90s hitchhiking in Poland was an official way of travelling [...]. Thousands of people were hitchhiking through all these years – and most of them have cars today, so very often do they repay the debt” (Hitchwiki, 2023).

Opening the borders in the 1990s and later joining the European Union in 2004 and the Schengen zone in 2007, opened new destinations in Western and Southern Europe for young Polish travellers. The low purchasing power of Polish earnings and the discovery of the presence of hitchhiking culture in the West encouraged the use of this way of transportation to save money in travelling for leisure or for summer jobs abroad (Czupryński, 2005). On the other hand, destinations in the East, including the Balkan Peninsula and the former Soviet Union countries became the frontier for Polish budget and niche travellers (Horolets, 2013). A vivid community of hitchhikers emerged, consisting of students associations, and NGOs which organise several yearly hitchhiking races such as Międzynarodowe Mistrzostwa Autostopowe, Auto Stop Race, or Krakostop (Kusiak, 2017); travellers events (e.g. “Koloso” in Gdynia (Koloso, 2023)), and online websites, fora and blogs.

The representations of hitchhiking in traditional and new media

Despite being on the fringe of mainstream travel culture, hitchhiking was and is a common topic in media. There are world-famous American accounts of hitchhiking journeys in classic literature, e.g. Kerouac’s *On the Road* (Kerouac, 1957), more contemporary first-person narratives, such as Wald’s *Riding with Strangers* (Wald, 2006), or biographical books, such as Krakauer’s *Into the Wild* (Krakauer, 1996).

Cinema movies, particularly road thrillers such as 1953 *The Hitchhiker* and *The Hitcher* movie series (original movie from 1986, its 2003 sequel and 2007 remake), or media or fictional stories of hitchhikers being victims of crimes have played a role in shaping the negative image of hitchhikers and associating it with criminality (Chesters & Smith, 2001; Garner, 2008). Still, in modern cinema hitchhiking is presented more positively. According to a query of the IMDb website, between 1980 and 1999, there were 22 world-famous films including the topic

of hitchhiking, 7 of which portrayed it in a negative way (hitchhiker as a dangerous criminal or a victim of a crime), while 6 positively (positive presentation of a hitchhiker, e.g. in *Rambo: First Blood* from 1982). In the years 2000–2018 already 15 out of 27 films portrayed hitchhiking positively, either using it as a main topic (e.g. *Into the Wild* screen adaptation from 2007) or episodically (e.g. Superman in the *Man of Steel* from 2013). With time, hitchhiking is getting more present and more often the main topic of movies, which proves the renaissance of the interest in this practice.

The beginning of the 21st century marks the emergence of new forms of media enabled by Internet communication, including video blogs and short movies posted on streaming platforms, predominantly YouTube, which may attract thousands of viewers and in some demographic strata replace traditional media. The Polish Internet scene alone houses numerous thematic hitchhiking vloggers. The two most popular are Dawid “Faza” Fazowski’s authoring a YouTube “Przez Świat Na Fazie” channel (536 thousand subscribers in May 2023), where he posts videos from his hitchhiking trips around the world, originally from the perspective of a newcomer to this kind of adventure who set ambitious travel goals ahead of him. The second is Michał Pater with the channel “Hitchhiking To The End Of The World” (213 thousand subscribers in May 2023), presenting more detailed and knowledgeable reports of visited regions. This author also collects financial support for his trips from viewers via the crowdsourcing Internet platform Patronite.

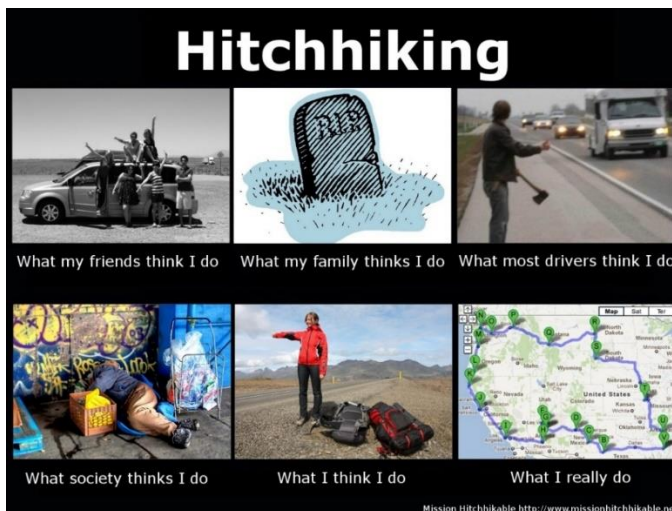
Hitchhiking has also marked its presence in the world of computer games. Even though they were usually niche or grotesque productions, they gained attention with the help of popular gaming streamers who play and test various computer games on their YouTube channels. There are, for example, two games drawing a stereotypical picture of hitchhiking as a risky or criminal activity. Both are beta-versions of games that did not make it to mass consumption. In the adventure game, *Rides With Strangers*, a player impersonates a young woman who travels to a different city by thumb, which leads to potentially dangerous encounters with drivers. In the second game, *The Road Trip*, the roles are reversed – it is the driver that the player impersonates, while hitchhikers are dangerous villains. Two more recent productions portray hitchhiking more positively. In *Hitchhiker: A Mystery Game*, a player becomes a hitchhiker suffering from amnesia, who needs to find answers about his identity and history by talking to drivers and other persons he meets while travelling. Another game, *Road 96*, is an adventure game where the main characters hitchhike to leave the fictitious totalitarian country. Similarly to other culture media, computer games implement two approaches to portray hitchhiking: fear and mockery typical for outsiders’ view, and adventure and complexity perceived by the insiders.

Another new form of media that emerged with the popularisation of the Internet and social media is Internet memes defined as “a form of visual enter-

tainment” represented by often simplistic images with additional text, referring to popular culture, video games, politics etc., and being subject to iterative re-mixes (Börzsei, 2013). Memes on hitchhiking often mock either the practice of hitchhiking, e.g. by associating thumb signal with the Internet like button (Fig. 1a), or the stereotypes around hitchhiking like the association between hitchhikers and psychopath murderers. A separate category of insider memes created by hitchhikers themselves and shared on their online mediums of communication aims to build and express the communal identity (Fig. 1b).



(a)



(b)

Figure 1

Internet memes related to hitchhiking: (a) a meme mocking hitchhikers using an ostensible misunderstanding: “That feel when some people by the road give likes to your car (<https://kwejk.pl/obrazek/3026721>); (b) a meme used to express the communal identity of hitchhikers (<https://missionhitchhikable.wordpress.com/2012/03/03/what-do-hitchhikers-really-do/>)

Materials and methods of interview and autoethnographic research

In the empirical part of the paper, we use qualitative methodology. We employ interviews as well as the first author's autoethnography defined as a personal experience narrative (Butz & Besio, 2009). The interviews were conducted by telephone or Internet in May 2021. Five interviewees participating in the study were purpose-selected. Each of them has extensive hitchhiking experience, yet varied in length, and geographic scope. They are all young people in their 20s, four of them are Polish males, and one is a Chinese female. Interviewee A has mainly hitchhiked in Poland and the Baltic countries. Interviewee B is a university student, and he has hitchhiked extensively in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Western Asia. Interviewee C is educated in tourism, has travelled by thumb in all inhabited continents except South America and shares his experience on a popular Facebook profile. Interviewee D has hitchhiked in 27 countries to date, and his longest trip was undertaken at the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021, at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. He runs a popular Facebook profile and YouTube channel. The last interviewee (E) is the only female and non-Polish participant in the study, a Chinese long-term hitchhiking traveller in Europe.

To make the structure of the interviews clear to the reader, interview questions were divided into four categories. The first one referred to the respondents' experience in catching a ride and their basic beliefs about hitchhiking, such as its greatest advantages, or opinions on why drivers give rides. The second category concerned the respondents' opinions on the general changes in the hitchhiking culture and practice in recent years. The third category referred to the use of information and communication technologies by hitchhikers. The questions related, for example, to online applications used while travelling, or using social networks for sharing travel experiences. The last question category concerned the perception of the future of hitchhiking, in the context, among others, of the aforementioned role of the media in shaping popular opinion on hitchhiking, or the interviewees' position on the future of hitchhiking after the COVID-19 pandemic. Two interviewees have experience in hitchhiking during the pandemic and were therefore asked additional questions, regarding the details of hitchhiking in seemingly unfavourable circumstances.

The first author of the paper describes himself as a hitchhiker and has ten years of experience in travelling both in Poland and other European and Asian countries. During his hitchhiking journeys he visited 20 countries, including e.g. the Mediterranean countries, the Baltic states and the island of Taiwan. His opinions are thus based on his personal experience during his trips, as well as information obtained from other hitchhikers in the course of his hitchhiking career when he met many people sharing a similar passion for travel. During ten

years he had a chance to observe changes following the technological developments that significantly eased thumb travelling. His opinions will be therefore used to supplement the interviewees' opinions.

Results of interviews and autoethnography

Hitchhiking experience

The first topics covered in the interviews were the origins of interest in hitchhiking, motivations to choose this way of travelling and its major advantages compared to other forms of tourism. For all Polish interviewees, experiencing adventure and contact with other cultures seem to be the most important motives to hitchhike. Travelling by thumb provides a unique personal experience. The unexpectedness and uniqueness of each trip force hitchhikers to leave their comfort zone, learn to be resourceful and cope with new and challenging situations. Interviewee D claims that hitchhiking has changed his value system as he gained respect and reason.

This way of travelling allows them to explore the world, but also meet new people and cultures in their everyday environments — an experience hardly accessible to an institutionalised tourist. Attempts to communicate in the absence of a common language, or drivers' hospitality (some of them e.g. offer free "sightseeing tours" in the visited regions), encouraged them even more to continue their journey. As interviewee E recalls, such situations "restored her faith in humanity."

Down-to-earth motives also play a role: three interviewees mention the obvious financial advantage of such a way of travel. The costs required to visit other continents or very disconnected parts of the world by conventional means would be discouraging. Therefore, free hitchhiking allows tourists to visit regions that they would not normally be able to afford. Interviewee E mentioned the opportunity to travel around Europe at a low cost as the main reason to consider hitchhiking.

The path from the motives to starting a hitchhiking career varied in individual cases. Interviewees A and C were introduced to this activity by acquaintances who had already had experience in hitchhiking. Interviewee D, on the other hand, was inspired while studying at high school by one of the hitchhikers' YouTube channels. It is an example of how the online presence of hitchhiking culture mentioned in the earlier part of the work attracts new people to this way of travel.

At the time of the interviews, three respondents had already given up hitchhiking. For all of them, it was related to "entering an adult life", including new

professional and family obligations. Despite a desire to continue travelling, including hitchhiking, the need of constant taking care e.g. of their online business (interviewee C) does not match with the unpredictability of hitchhiking. This way of transportation is no more appealing when one needs to plan their free time in advance and in detail.

Trying to change the perspective, the respondents were also asked about their views on drivers' motivation to give a ride to hitchhikers. Most interviewees agree that there is no single motive. A large group of European drivers are those who used to hitchhike in the past and now, as interviewee B put it "they pay their debts". Some drivers are motivated by curiosity, the opportunity to meet and talk to a foreigner, willingness to experience an adventure, or pure admiration for the enthusiasm of hitchhikers. Interviewee D mentioned drivers who had wanted to try hitchhiking but had no courage to do it, and people looking for a companion to talk to, particularly on long journeys or at night. He also points at an "impulse" factor exemplified by the story of a 60-year-old businessman who admitted to giving a ride for the first time in his life, and explained his decision by an indescribable impulse he felt when seeing hitchhikers standing on the road with large backpacks. The respondents also mentioned drivers' pure helplessness and hospitality, or even pity, particularly when hitchhikers stand on a roadside in unfavourable weather conditions or in a dangerous area. Interviewee E's responses contrasted with the others, due to her status as a woman with a clearly foreign look. She mentioned sexual motives frequently expressed by male drivers (though she had not experienced sexual assault from their side), as well as particular hospitality and care offered to her due to her foreign look and language.

The interviewed hitchhikers point out multiple factors affecting drivers' willingness to give rides reflected by the waiting times ranging between zero (when a driver sees a hitchhiker getting out of another car and stops, aware of the hitchhiker's intentions) or a few seconds and several hours. Waiting time depends on the size of the travel company and its gender structure. Interviewee D started hitchhiking together with another male traveller he met on Facebook, but after 3-hour attempts to stop drivers together, they decided to split and then became more successful when catching rides. Since then, the interviewee travels alone. Interviewee E pointed out that hitchhiking as a single woman increases the chances of drivers stopping, which she easily noticed in the Balkan countries where she travelled the most. The interviewees also spoke about the importance of a location for catching a ride. Interviewee D mentioned Turkey as a "hitchhiking paradise" due to culturally rooted hospitality to strangers, while interviewee C considers Asian countries the easiest and North America the most difficult part of the world for hitchhiking. The respondents also noticed the importance of time of the year and day for hitchhiking efficiency: drivers are par-

ticularly eager to give rides in places and times unusual for an average tourist, e.g. during winter in typical summer tourist destinations. Interviewee D referred to his trip beyond the Arctic Circle, where, despite little traffic of vehicles, almost every driver stopped to pick him up due to the scarce population and low presence of tourists.

Hitchhiking transformations in the recent years

In the opinion of the first author of the work, the current socio-economic development of the world has vastly facilitated travelling and tourism, including hitchhiking. The number of member countries of the Schengen area, or those entering into agreements on visa-free travel, has been increasing over the recent decades, facilitating international mobility. For hitchhikers, it has particular importance, as their trips are usually spontaneous and hard to plan in a precise time frame, so visa regulations requiring advanced and detailed time scheduling may be a major obstacle. Another convenience is the availability of affordable travel insurance, e.g. linked to the Euro26 card, which gives every hitchhiker an increased sense of security. On the other hand, universal access to the Internet around the world allows for hassle-free verification and the use of insurance in almost any region of the world.

The growing interest in active tourism has significantly increased the demand for tourist equipment. Mass production has led to the reduction of prices. Such equipment has also become easily accessible in traditional shops, and chain stores such as Decathlon, as well as directly from producers e.g. via the AliExpress platform. Basic hitchhiker's equipment including a tourist backpack, a tent, a sleeping mat and a sleeping bag sufficing for years of travel could be bought for PLN 330 (EUR 73) in 2021. The possibility of ordering goods online and learning other users' opinions and suggestions on online forums further eases the purchase of reliable equipment at low cost. On the other hand, an increase in affordability and number of electronic devices (mobile phones, cameras, power banks) creates specific safety challenges: interviewee D prefers not to sleep in a tent, particularly in urbanised areas, for this reason, but would rather look for a Couchsurfing opportunity or even resort to commercial accommodation. Moreover, the increased affordability of commercial tourism services such as international flight or bus tickets may discourage long-distance hitchhiking.

One of the relatively new challenges for hitchhikers in Poland is the recent development of motorways and expressways, which started at the beginning of the 21st century (Koziarski, 2021). On the one hand, thanks to such modern roads, hitchhikers can cover distances of hundreds or even thousands of kilometres with a single vehicle. On the other hand, on such roads, cars can be stopped only at entrances or petrol stations, not at any point, as is the case on secondary

roads. Hitchhikers have to adapt to this, e.g. the use of a cardboard sign with the name of the destination written on it works great as a form of initial communication with the driver. Also planning the route when travelling on motorways and expressways requires higher awareness of the map and traffic conditions, as it is easy to get stuck at a place with low chances to stop any car. Thus, interviewee D prefers to carefully evaluate drivers' offers, not only considering the distance they can cover but also the quality of the endpoint in terms of the chances of further hitchhiking.

The use of the Internet and mobile applications in hitchhiking

The interviewees and the first author are convinced that one of the major changes in hitchhiking in recent years is the ease of access to mobile Internet, Internet applications and websites, while on the road. Aside from various technical improvements, the cost and easiness of accessing the Internet within the European Union were reduced with the abolishment of international roaming charges as of 2017. Before that regulation, travellers had to either buy a separate SIM card in each visited country, find Wi-Fi access points, ask local Internet users to share the connection via a mobile Wi-Fi hotspot or pay horrendous roaming charges for the use of home-country operator services. This limited not only the Internet use but also longer conversations with one's family. The same limitations still apply to the countries outside of the European Union. Here an online community of travellers may help: a website prepaid-data-sim-card.fandom.com provides information on GSM network offers from over 200 countries and regions of the world (Prepaid Data SIM Card Wiki, 2023).

Map applications are among those most useful when planning hitchhiking trips as well as while on the road. Apart from Google Maps, Maps.me is the application commonly mentioned by the interviewees. One key advantage of the latter one is often a more detailed and updated database derived from OpenStreetMap, which contains small paths not marked on Google Maps. Maps.me also enables downloading complete country maps in the device's memory, which is a crucial feature for hitchhikers, particularly in countries with a high price of Internet connection, as only the reach of a GPS signal is required to navigate. The replacement of traditional maps with their electronic counterparts may be one of the major transformations in the hitchhiking culture that happened in the digital era. Interviewee A admitted that he had never used a paper map in his life except in school or for fun. For Interviewee E, Maps.me is the single indispensable application without which she cannot imagine hitchhiking at all. Respondents also mentioned the applications facilitating the search for public transportation: Jakdojade.pl application displays current timetables of public transport means in many Polish cities, which is useful particularly for

hitchhikers trying to get out of a larger city centre to a site more convenient for catching a ride.

Another aspect of hitchhiking travel that mobile applications have facilitated is the communication between travellers and drivers. The presence of the language barrier can be very problematic, especially in distant countries. Nowadays, technology partially solves the problem. Interviewees C and D described the use of the Google Translate application to communicate in many foreign languages. After equipping their mobile phones with an Internet connection, they use the application to write sentences and translate them to interlocutors using voice synthesising. The translator can translate even long sentences and allows for quite easy basic communication with the driver. It replaces the previous technique of preparing a paper with a list of short useful sentences in the local language, e.g. where one is going or where they are from, to show to the drivers. Still, neither such a note nor Google Translate does allow for a full translation of complex and nuanced conversations. Thus, the aforesaid approach does not entirely eliminate the language barrier in getting to know local cultures, which takes away a lot of pleasure from travelling. For instance, interviewee B does not remember his trip to Russia well because, unlike his companion, he did not speak Russian and could not speak to the drivers, missing an essential part of the experience.

Among other applications and websites dedicated to all travellers, but useful for hitchhikers as well, are travel-oriented banking applications, e.g. Revolut, an online banking system that allows one to hold and exchange money at attractive rates across multiple currencies, pay by card and withdraw cash at ATMs in most countries around the world. Due to this flexibility of the offer and safety measures protecting one's money in the event of card loss or theft, it is popular among the interviewed hitchhikers.

The essence of hitchhiking is travelling for free, and hitchhikers often extend this principle to accommodation while on a trip, by staying in tents outside of commercial campsites. Yet, pitching a tent may be difficult, illegal or dangerous in urbanised areas. This is the reason for the high popularity of the Couchsurfing platform among hitchhikers, the interviewees included, giving them an opportunity to find free accommodation in many regions of the world offered by other users of the platform. The system allows travellers and people offering accommodation to set up profiles on which they can mark the countries they have visited, their interests and the languages they speak. A person looking for a place to sleep can send an accommodation request, as well as arrange other activities, such as sightseeing together. Hosting guests via Couchsurfing is not a commercial activity, hence it was possible even during the pandemic and the accompanying limitations on the operation of hotels and other accommodation businesses. Some respondents also mention the use of the Airbnb platform based

on a similar model of peer-to-peer accommodation, with a notable difference in the form of guests' payment to the host (Adamiak, 2021).

The interviewed hitchhikers were also asked about their use and opinion on the ridesharing platforms. The most popular one in Poland as well as in multiple other European countries is BlaBlaCar (BlaBlaCar, 2023). The mechanism is similar to hitchhiking as a traveller rides in a stranger's car. However, in BlaBlaCar, the passenger pays for the ride and their trip's time and route are previously agreed upon through the online platform. The service also provides more sense of security, as each participant needs to register on the platform using a telephone number, and a driver rating system is embedded in the platform. The interviewees' opinions on the relations between BlaBlaCar and hitchhiking are divided. For interviewee D, hitchhiking and ridesharing platforms have absolutely nothing in common, as spontaneity, essential for hitchhiking, is totally eliminated in case of BlaBlaCar. Interviewee A even states that the presence of such platforms reduces the number of people willing to hitchhike as it offers more comfort and convenience. Interviewee C, on the other hand, claims that using services such as BlaBlaCar may encourage people to hitchhike in the traditional way as it familiarises them with riding with strangers and shows that meeting new people can turn out to be a real adventure.

The Hitchwiki.org website, the previously mentioned collaborative encyclopedia of hitchhiking (Hitchwiki, 2023b), is an invaluable help in hitchhiking trips. The website is developed simultaneously in sixteen languages (including Polish), but its English version has the most extensive content. In addition to general information on how to start an adventure with hitchhiking, the encyclopedia describes the hitchhiking culture, important risks and dangers, and the basics of language communication in most countries of the world. Another important element is the database of world cities with detailed information on how to reach the exit roads from city centres, which addresses one of the greatest difficulties in hitchhiking, particularly in large agglomerations. The website also contains an online map with places suitable for catching a ride. The spots are described in detail by other hitchhikers, ranked on a 1 to 5 quality scale, as well as by the estimated average amount of time needed to get a lift. Changes in road conditions and further tips regarding hitchhiking in a given spot are updated by other users' comments.

Last but not least, hitchhikers use social media while planning the trip, travelling, and after coming back home. On the most popular social networking site, Facebook, there are many groups connecting hitchhikers. The largest Polish-speaking group of this kind, "Autostopowiczeczyli MY :)" was established in 2010 and currently has over 54 thousand members. The group administrators have created a system of tags enabling the participants to easily find announcements and advice of their interest. For example, the "emergency" tag indicates that

a person needs quick help, often asking for accommodation in some city, the “integration” tag contains proposals to meet with other members of the group, the “tips” tag indicates looking for advice on various topics, while “looking for a companion” announcements help to find company for a planned hitchhiking trip.

Social media are also used to share travel experiences, often not only with close friends but a wide audience of followers. Again, the attitudes and behaviour in this regard differ within the group of interviewees. Most of them do share their experiences while on the trip and afterwards, predominantly on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, receiving varied interest. Only interviewee A stated that he does not run any profile of the described nature, however, he mentions that he shared photos from the trip on his private Facebook profile.

The global availability of the Internet and smartphones has made it much easier to hitchhike today than it used to be in the past. Maps, once required for long-distance travel, have been replaced with map applications. Internet sources such as Hitchwiki.org make it easier to find a good spot for catching a ride, which used to be particularly difficult in big cities. Forums, websites and social media provide answers to most of the questions that bother particularly inexperienced hitchhikers. Internet communication thus helps to save money, space in luggage and time when catching a ride. Yet, the advent of sharing economy platforms such as ridesharing applications both enriches and challenges the tradition of hitchhiking.

Hitchhiking in the COVID-19 pandemic

The global pandemic has changed the conditions for mobility and tourism, including hitchhiking. Border closures hindered international travelling in many countries for months. Also, frequently changing regulations and situations at the borders of countries and within them could deter hitchhikers, particularly inexperienced ones from trying out hitchhiking for the first time. A more subtle obstacle was a change in drivers’ attitudes, i.e. more wariness of strangers, including foreigners. For example, Taiwanese drivers often stopped to help due to culturally rooted politeness, but then interviewed a given hitchhiker about their origin, length of stay on the island, or purpose of arrival, before letting them enter the vehicle. Some drivers even asked to see the hitchhiker’s documents, such as their ID card, passport or resident permit, to avoid possible problems in the event of a police inspection. Such increased caution further augments the problem of the language barrier, which can however be overcome, for example, by using the previously described Google Translate, a note with useful phrases, or learning appropriate sentences in the language of the visited country. Another pandemic-induced change in hitchhiking behaviour noticed by interviewee E was the need to wear a facemask, not only because of drivers’ requests

but also because of some countries' sanitary regulations, which required it even when travelling by car.

The pandemic situation has also had positive consequences for some hitchhikers' travel experience. Interviewee D mentioned that in his opinion catching a bargain has never been easier. He has noticed that the time needed to get a lift has significantly shortened. Considerably reduced tourist traffic, particularly outside Europe, made him be treated as a "VIP Tourist" by local drivers and inhabitants. Most of the people he met were willing to help him precisely because of their interest in long-not-seen tourists with backpacks. Also, in some Asian countries with strict border crossing restrictions and low infection rates in the first year of the pandemic, after entering such a country and fulfilling mandatory quarantine, staying and travelling within its borders was not problematic for a foreigner. The respondents also noticed increased media attention given to travel, hitchhiking included, during the pandemic. Interviewee A speculated that people who missed travelling and tourism were more interested in cultural products related to travel, which positively influenced the image of travel in the eyes of society. Interviewees B and C suppose that these media may inspire new hitchhikers.

Therefore, hitchhiking at the time of the pandemic was possible but associated with a change of convention. Searching for a travel destination convenient due to not so demanding restrictions required a potential hitchhiker to spend much more time, patience and money. Interviewee D claims that crossing international borders was indeed difficult, but it could be valued as an additional source of adrenaline. Possible loopholes in regulations that could be used by hitchhikers included the possibility of travelling with truck drivers who, in many cases, were not subject to strict control. It means that even in the face of the global pandemic, hitchhiking, due to its basic assumptions and intrinsic flexibility, could be adapted to the circumstances and still practised.

Since the time the interviews were held, the situation has returned largely to normal due to widespread vaccination, population immunity, introduction of the vaccination certificates and lifting most travel restrictions related to the pandemic. Most interviewees agree that once most restrictions were lifted, hitchhiking would return to its pre-pandemic form, yet, not immediately. As interviewee C predicts, trust in strangers will take months or even years to rebuild. So hitchhiking, which in a way depends on the mutual trust of at least two people, may also have to wait for its revival. At least, interviewee E predicts that from now on drivers will be much more careful about who they stop for. Interviewee A doubts that the number of both travellers and drivers giving them a lift will return to the pre-pandemic state.

Conclusions

Hitchhiking has a long history as a means of transportation, a way of social interaction, and a type of alternative tourism. However, it has been experiencing transformations in recent years as a result of social trends including the digitalisation of travel and culture. Similarly to other forms of mobility, it was also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and non-pharmaceutical interventions aiming to stop the disease. The paper aimed to discuss the current developments and possible futures of hitchhiking culture based on media sources including the new media, as well as autoethnographic accounts and in-depth interviews with experienced hitchhikers, performed during the pandemic.

There is a popular opinion that the recent decades have seen a decline in hitchhiking culture due to increased car ownership and cheap long-distance public transportation, individualism and increased fear associated with this way of travelling, which is fuelled by media reports on the dangers of such an activity. Contrary to this trend, fewer formalities needed to travel internationally, at least in Europe, growing affordability of equipment and opening borders acted in favour of this way of transportation. What is more, latest cultural products such as popular movies tend to present hitchhiking positively, and new media venues, such as video streaming platforms are used by travel creators to popularise various types of niche activities, hitchhiking included. Social media play a major role in the globalisation culture, where hitchhiking is no exception as, in its Western form originating from Europe and North America, it is being adopted in other parts of the world not only by Western backpackers but also travellers originating from other cultural regions (Zhou, 2020).

The current technological development facilitates almost every aspect of life, travelling included. It is not different with hitchhiking, which is easier than ever thanks to access to websites, social media, and mobile applications. Technology helps in orientation, communication with drivers, finding suitable places to stop cars, looking for free or cheap accommodation, exchanging currencies, and using common experience and advice from a global community of hitchhikers and backpackers. In the era of the COVID-19 pandemic, easy access to ever-changing information concerning e.g. entry regulations, gained a new importance. Most subjects of the research have witnessed the popularisation of access to mobile Internet. Lack of access to such technologies would be particularly problematic for people who are just starting their adventure with hitchhiking. Experienced hitchhikers, however, could decide to travel without electronic devices, treating it as a form of challenge, recreating the traditional way of travelling from years before.

The history and development of hitchhiking is a good example of how constant cultivation and adaptation of tradition to new realities can keep it alive. It

has become rooted in international culture, and will not cease to be cultivated and forgotten. In the development of today's hitchhiking culture, the community of websites and social media plays a major role, helping experienced travellers in their journeys, and also supporting the introduction of new people to the practice. It is thanks to such organised activities that hitchhiking has a *raison d'être* in the future.

Keeping in mind that the culture of hitchhiking will persist, there remain open questions regarding the direction of its evolution. This offers possible new research areas for the future. They include the application of new methodical approaches, e.g. quantitative studies, which are needed to evaluate the scope and generalise conclusions on the entire population but have been scarce to date due to the inherently unorganised nature of hitchhiking tourism. They may become possible now with the use of web-based big data and surveys, aside from already applied qualitative ethnographic methods. New research questions, in turn, refer to the future transformations of hitchhiking tourism caused not only by the ever-changing international political situation but also by the commodification of tourism, the impact of web reputation on travel behaviour transforming interactions with local populations, drivers and other participants of hitchhiking tourism.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Hitchhiking: history, digitalisation and the future after the COVID-19 pandemic*.

FUNDING

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of the article *Hitchhiking: history, digitalisation and the future after the COVID-19 pandemic*.

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**BIOGRAMY, DYSKUSJE, POLEMIKI, RECENZJE,
PRZEGLĄD WYDAWNICTW, SPRAWOZDANIA**

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Biogramy, dyskusje, polemiki, recenzje, przegląd wydawnictw, sprawozdania

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