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OLYMPISM IN POLAND IN SYSTEM OF COMMUNIST SPORT AND HIS RENNAISSANCE AFTER 1989

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SUMMARY

Although the Olympic organization, namely the Polish Olympic Committee (PKOl) is the youngest one of Central European countries there has been promoted the Olympic idea by many enthusiasts since the time of the restoration of the modern Olympic Games. Despite the initial distrust of intellectuals and of the public after the First World War Olympism was being quickly developing. After the Second World War, it was used by the Communist power only as a weapon for a rivalry with the imperialist powers and with the Communist rivals. The Olympic Committee was entirely subordinated to the state organization and since fifties they had a common chairman as well. The subordinate position had its advantage - the income of the state money was not very limited. After the fall of the communist regime and the threat of splitting PKOl gained independence, but also had to start looking for other financial resources than the state treasury.

Key words: Poland, Olympic Committee, Communism

INTRODUCTION

Poles were in a very different situation than the Czechs and Hungarians at the time of renewal of the modern Olympic Games. Their territory was divided among three state units¹.

Therefore, it was impossible to establish the Polish Olympic Committee in time when Congress for restoration of the Olympic Games in Paris was held in June 1894, although it was written about it in the Polish press. *Gazeta Lwowska* brought an extensive article about this extraordinary event. Nevertheless, restorer of modern games, Baron Pierre de Coubertin knew about the Poles and their interest in the sport. He had a few friends among them from the time of high school studies at the Jesuit school in Paris. Then, during his

¹ "Three divisions of Poland" meant the liquidation of the Polish state, which was restored after the First World War. The third and final partition of Poland was finished in 1795. 25th November the Polish king Stanislaw August formally signed his abdication and consent to the dissolution of the Polish state. The territory was divided between Austria, Prussia and Russia.

stay in England in the 80's of the 19th century, he renewed contacts with his classmates who continued to study at Oxford or Cambridge (Lipoński, W., Lipoński, S., 2008).

The Poles, however, participated at the Olympics despite the fact that they had any national Olympic committee. They missed the first modern Games in Athens in 1896. But the Games were watched by *Gazeta Narodowa* or *Dziennik Polski*, in which the sports festival was reported by a Polish emigrant Zygmunt Mineyko² known as the first Polish Olympic reporter. *Kurier Poznański* pointed out that the Games give an opportunity to the nations to show their strength on the international scene. Under the impression of the first successful Olympic Games sports enthusiasts were trying to participate in Paris four years later. Finally, only a delegation of gymnastics officials from Sokol led by Edmund Czar attended as observers.

For the first time Polish athletes participated at the Olympic Games in London in 1908. However, they participated under the colours of Austria and Russia. Poles from the Prussian part have never participated at the Games. It was the most hostile part to the Poles. The Polish language in schools was banned; there was no closer collaboration with the Prussian sports federations or clubs (Lipoński, W., 2003). Russian and Austrian occupation part was more liberal. At the Games in Stockholm the situation was repeated, though, as Poles well noticed, Czechs and Hungarians started separately, although they were belonging under Austro-Hungarian Empire. End of the First World War, among other things, meant the restoration of a single Polish state and the emergence of the Polish Committee for the Olympic Games, soon renamed the Polish Olympic Committee (PKOl). It was founded on the 12th October 1919 in Hotel Francuski in Krakow by officials from Warsaw, Krakow and Lviv. Its first president became Stefan Lubomirski (Hadzelek, K., 1999, p. 4).

For the above reasons, the possibility of confirmation of national identity through the representation on the international sports scene has become even more crucial for Poles than for the Czechs and Hungarians (Girginov, P., 2004, p. 695). Baron Coubertin wrote in 1906 that "Poland is alive and can not be killed. Poles are strange nation that draws strength from itself; it has no marked boundaries but defies all tyrannies." (*90 lat na olimpijski szlaku*, p. 5). Therefore, the entrance to the Olympic family was received with great enthusiasm in Poland and Poles are still extremely proud on their sports representatives.

METHODS

Literature and comprehensive studies, which are dedicated to the Polish Olympic movement, are focused primarily on its oldest period; until the end of World War II. Works devoted to more recent time, are dedicated to the participation of representatives of Poland at the Olympics, but not to the position of the Polish Olympic Committee (PKOl) in the state system of sport, nor to the influence of the change of political regime on PKOl. Sources that relate to this subject are mostly published in Polish language. It is necessary to

² An interesting figure of Polish history, he competed in the Polish "January Uprising" against Russia in 1863, spent many years in a labour camp in Siberia. Then he lived in Athens and worked for the Greek government, which awarded him an honorary citizenship. Later he got married with daughter of Greek Prime Minister George Papandreu. <http://pages.interlog.com/mineykok/~info.html> 2011-3-20.

use the institutional sources, laws or regulations. For lack of resources I used mostly unwritten sources, interviews with important members of the Polish Olympic Movement. In particular, with Professor W. Lipoński, sports historian and head of the Department of Olympism at the Department of History and Organization of PE of the Academy of Physical Education in Poznań, a former vice-chairman of the Polish Olympic Committee. I made an interview with the member of Board of PKOl Dr. K. Hadzelek, the author of many articles on this topic and Chairman of the Polish Olympic Foundation. I made another interviews with the General Secretary of PKOl A. Krzesiński and with Director for International Relations of PKOl and sports historian Dr. M. Koszewska. I made an interview with M. Bronikowska, a member of the Department of Olympism at the Academy in Poznań. I tried to get comprehensive information about the development of the Polish Olympic Movement at the time of communism and the time closely following.

POLISH OLYMPIC COMMITTEE BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS

Enormous expansion of sport after the restoration of an independent Poland state after the First World War is demonstrated by the existence of more than 200 sports periodicals between 1919–1939 (Lipoński, W., 2003). The most important is considered *Przegląd Sportowy* (Sports Review). Under the leadership of the Polish poet Kazimierz Wierzyński, who won the Olympic art contest at the Olympic Games 1928 in Amsterdam with a poem Olympic laurel, became the weekly newspaper.

After the establishment of PKOl in October 1919 Poles were invited at the first post-war Games in Antwerp. The preparation for the Games was successfully going on, but the Polish-Russian war 1919–1921, in which many athletes were actively involved, made the Polish participation impossible. During the Games a bloody battle of Warsaw was raging³. The first Olympic Games for the Polish representation, which won two medals, thus became the Games in Paris four years later.⁴

Despite the initial enthusiasm the Olympic movement was developing slowly in twenties. Difficulties were caused by misunderstanding of the public of the Olympic philosophy and its affiliated teaching ideas. The public perceive Olympism only as sports contests and intellectuals attacked the Olympic Movement as a danger for the Polish culture (Lipoński, W., 2003). Poles, however, were successful in international sports diplomacy. They had two members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) since 1928. The members were the first President of PKOl and Ignacy Matuszewski. In 1937 the IOC met in Warsaw as well.

Sport have experienced a huge boom in the second half of the twenties, particularly through engagement of foreign coaches such as Estonian Alexander Klumberg, decathlon world record holder and Olympic medallist. Halina Konopacká and Zygmunt Heliasz, later Olympic medallists, were training under his leadership. The biggest talents, especially athletics, boxing and fencing, have emerged shortly before the outbreak of

³ Poles were represented only by a delegation holding the Polish national flag.

⁴ Poles took part at the Winter sports week in Chamonix in 1924, which was later recognized as the first Winter Olympic Games at the Olympic Congress in Prague held in 1925.

World War II. That is why Poles were expecting a great success at the Olympic Games in 1940 and 1944. Both Games were cancelled because of the Second World War and many, not only Polish, athletes perished in it.

FROM THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE COMMUNIST REGIME

Poland was the most damaged country of the Central European region. One fifth of all homes were destroyed. Main part of the big cities, with the exception of Krakow, Poles had to build again. It was necessary to reach a compromise in building of the government. The United States and Great Britain were cooperating mainly with London exile, while the Soviet Union with the Lublin (Communist) government⁵. The accepted compromise was advantageous for Moscow. It was a provisional government of national unity created by combining the existing pro-Soviet Lublin government with a group around the peasant movement of Stanislaw Mikolajczyk. This government should be then reorganized on the basis of free elections. But this did not happen; the interim government lasted from the end of June 1945 until January 1947. Communists in this period were gathering powers. They headed the most important power ministries. Officially, the repression was against members of the right underground parties, in fact, it landed hard on the political rivals of the Communists. The elections were held on 19th January 1947 and they were held under the control of the Communists. Falsified results gave 80% of the votes to the government block and just 10,3% of the Polish People's Party.

The least favourable conditions in Central Europe for the introduction of Soviet socialism were in Poland. The Communists were labelled as agents of Moscow and in the country greatly dominated anti-Russian sentiments due to historical experience. The Socialist Party (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna PPS) has been de facto liquidated as well as other non-Communist parties. Its union with the Workers' Party (Polska Partia Robotniczna, PPR) was repeatedly enforced by Wladyslaw Gomulka. Merge congress took place in Warsaw in mid-December 1948 and the Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, PZPR) was founded. Boleslaw Bierut stood in the head of it. Under this unified party the unification of all systems continued.

Main part of sports facilities was destroyed during the Second World War. Girginov (2004) states, that in Poland the war destroyed 77% of sports facilities, in Warsaw, even 86%. Many athletes and sport officials died in the war in concentration camps, at the front and the massacre at Katyn. Others have emigrated during the beginning of a peaceful time and gradually changing political system. Both Polish members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) General Stanislaw Rouppert and Colonel Ignacy Matuszewski remained in emigration after the war. Both died in 1946 and Poland lost the privilege of two members of the IOC. New Polish member, university professor Jerzy Loth, was elected in 1948 after the backroom negotiations (Roniker, A., Sloniewski, M., 2000).

⁵ Since July 1944 there was a Polish Committee of National Liberation (Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego, PKWN). It was a power body closely connected with the Soviets prepared to take control of the territories occupied by the Red Army. 31st December 1944 it was renamed the Provisional Government of the Republic of Poland. It was recognized by the USSR.

In 1945 National Office for Physical Education, founded in 1926, was re-established as the State Office for Physical Education and Military Training. It was dedicated mainly to restore the activities of sports clubs and reconstruction of war-damaged sports facilities. Between 1945 and 1948, there were competing two concepts of physical education and sport – the pre-war, pro-Western, with its emphasis on traditional and “folk” Polish sports. The second was the Soviet concept, in which physical education was to serve the development of physical fitness in favour of the socialist system. It contained many military elements.

The Polish Olympic Committee was formally restored 24th March 1946. The officially head of it was the pre-war sports activist Alfred Loth and PKOl was, as before the war, connected with the Union of Polish Sports Federations (Związek Polskich związków Sportowych, ZPZS). The real intent of this post-war recovery was to attract the sports world an illusion of freedom “peoples of Poland”. 24th February 1947 PKOl became independent from ZPZS and it was preparing an expedition for the first post war Olympic Games. Activities of this free institution finished just two weeks after the closing ceremony of the Games in London, 1st September 1948 (Pasko, A., 2010).

DURING THE COMMUNIST REGIME

Situation in sport has significantly changed after the completion of the transition to a communist regime. The Main Office of Physical Culture (Główny Urząd Kultury Fizycznej, GUKF) was founded in the spring of 1948. Soviet model of physical education was introduced by the Parliamentary decree of 20th December 1948. GUKF became the Central Committee of Physical Culture (Główny Komitet Kultury Fizycznej, GKKF) in early 1949 (Lipoński, W., 1996). As the principal government agency for physical education and sport has survived with minor organizational adjustments to the 80's. The intentional destruction of Poland's pre-war structure of sport and its later reconstruction in the spirit of the victorious Soviet sports model was taking place under his leadership in the years 1948–1949. Sports experts, who did not die in the war and who returned to Poland, were excluded from activities in sports during these years (Lipoński, W., 2003). The reconstruction was conducted by the major sporting political attaché Colonel Henryk Szemberk. Development and support of bourgeois sports, such as skiing, was stopped under his leadership until 1956 and there were no contacts with the West (Lipoński, W., 2002).

But as critics of the Soviet sports model admit, its introduction was accompanied by some positive impacts. The centralization of financial and human resources, which were decimated by war, accelerated the restoration of sport and made it more efficient, despite under the unwanted political control. It led to the development of sports supported by the Soviet Union, such as gymnastics. At the turn of the 40's and 50's, Polish sport was, like other spheres of the society, under the control of internal Soviet intelligence People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs. Its colonel, Anatoly Mineckij, directed personnel purges in the sport and the disposal of many archival documents. The works of Soviet sports theorists have been translated and published under his leadership. His position was institutionalized; he became vice-chairman of the Central Committee of Physical Culture

and currently Vice-Chairman of the Polish Olympic Committee. He was famous for forcing Polish athletes and sport officials to drink vodka on the glory of the Polish-Soviet friendship to the extent that some of them had to be treated in hospital (Lipoński, W., 2003).

The entry of the Soviet Union on the international sporting field and especially on the Olympic field in 1952 was the reason why sport began to be perceived as a tool of propaganda and anti-imperialist power. It was necessary to win the “fight against imperialism”, in sport through the number of medals obtained. For this purpose, Communist officials began to cooperate with athletes whose careers finished with the advent of the communist regime. And thanks to the gradual release of a hard regime after Stalin’s death in 1953, ideologues withdrew slightly from their positions and they started to use people with excellent professional qualities (Lipoński, W., 2003). People such Antoni Moroński, high jump coach, Paweł Kozubek, trainer of hammer throwers or coach of sprinters Włodzimierz Drużbiak. Under their leadership, a group of sports, in which the achievements of Polish representatives significantly increased the prestige of the country, crystallized in the years 1950–1970. This group was formed by athletics, boxing, football, fencing and weightlifting. The strength of the socialist sport should demonstrate at home Spartakiads and Cycling Peace Race since 1948. The winning cyclists were treated as Polish national heroes, especially when they managed to defeat the Soviet cyclists, like Stanisław Królak winning in the mid-50’s.

Poles take pride in small things, which demonstrates it well. Jerseys of Polish representatives have never had an inscription Polish People’s Republic or its abbreviation PRL (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa). They always had a simple inscription – Poland. This trifle Poles considered as a small victory over the communist power and the political pressure.

The activities of the Polish Olympic Committee were renewed by resolution of Central Committee of Physical Culture 1st June 1950. Lucjan Motyka became the leader of it. Communist authorities viewed PKOl as an unwanted body, composed of admirers of bourgeois sport. At the same time, however they needed it. Without co-operation with PKOl the propaganda impacts would be considerably weaker, Polish athletes would not represent Poland without Olympic Committee. In 50’s GKKF dampened the activity of the Polish Olympic Committee. It was active always only for a short time before each Olympic Games and it was providing the preparation of Olympic team. All the time activities of PKOl were checked by people picked there by the Communists (Pasko, A., 2010).

The merger of the Socialist Party with the working party in mid-December 1948 and the emergence of the Polish United Workers’ Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, PZPR) were accompanied by a tacit agreement that those socialists, who support the union, will be rewarded with positions in the government and administration. Chair GKKF was one of those “reserved” positions. In 1952 it was occupied by the former Socialist Party member Włodzimierz Reczek, and a year later he became chairman of PKOl. He remained the head of the state office for sport, whose name changed in 1960 to the Central Committee of Physical Culture and Tourism (Główny Komitet Kultury Fizycznej i Turystyki, GKKFiT), and head of Olympic Committee after the end of Stalinism and the government of W. Gomułka followed by E. Gierek as First Secretary of the Communist Party (Lipoński, W., 2003). The Communists, however, failed to influence the exchange of

their man to the International Olympic Committee; W. Reczek became the member of IOC at its meeting in Athens in 1961, when J. Loth resigned, leaving only an honorary member of the IOC. Between 7th and 10th June 1969 IOC Session was held in Warsaw. It was assigned to the Poles thanks to 50th anniversary of the Polish Olympic Committee.

Under the personal connection of governmental sports institutions and Olympic Committee flourished, as in other Eastern European countries, professional sport. Stadiums, which became the scene of propaganda spectacles, were built but courses and stadiums for recreational sport were only few and in poor condition. All the money went into the sport from the state budget and state enterprises financed it as well. Top athletes were formally employed in factories, railways, post offices or in unions. Their only duty was to train, for which the companies were paying them a salary, for maintain semblance of amateurism.

The situation in Polish sport has changed somewhat in December 1970. After W. Gomułka was replaced by E. Gierek⁶, sport, besides propaganda tasks, had to demonstrate how was improving the quality of life of ordinary people (Lipoński, W., 2003). A Communist Bolesław Kapitan became the head of PKOL and GKKFiT in 1973. The subordinate position of PKOL to the state politics was the reason why Polish athletes, as well as athletes from other European “socialist countries” except Rumania, did not participate at the Olympic Games in Los Angeles 1984 despite already in 1983 Committee for the Polish Olympians Welcome was founded in the United States. It was formed by immigrants from Poland and led by Alexander Kurył. The Polish Olympic Committee discussed the thorny issue of a boycott at a special session of 17th May 1984. Those members of PKOL who were former athletes wanted Poland to participate. PKOL headed by Marian Renke⁷, however, supported the decision of the Soviet Union not to travel to the United States because of security risks attendant to participants from countries of the socialist camp (Lipoński, W., Lipoński, S., 2008). Poles had a chance to participate in Los Angeles, when Polish emigrants with activists from the Solidarity movement, who emigrated to the West after the declaration of martial law in 1981, created the independent Polish Olympic Committee. They submitted a declaration of the participation at the Games to the American Organizing Committee. Under these declaration Polish athletes living abroad could participate at the Games. This idea was rejected by the President of the IOC J. A. Samaranch (Lipoński, W., 2003).

Disillusionment of athletes and people from non-participation at the Olympics was accompanied by very bad economic situation of the country. The economic situation of Poland was bad despite repeated attempts to correct it, the food supply was limited, which led to the development of self-help small business and entrepreneurship (Vykoukal, J., Tejchman, M., 2003). Created a large “grey zone” of the economy, within which were

⁶ Gomułka finished signing the contract of the recognition of the Oder-Neisse border with West German Chancellor W. Brandt in December 1970. He was sure about his popularity after it and he announced an increase in food prices, which should help to solve the enormous debts of the country. 15th December, the storm of the workers’ resistance broke out in the Gdansk shipyard, then strike begun and spread to whole Poland. In Warsaw tanks pulled out into the streets and soldiers were shooting against demonstrators. The bloody clashes with police and army lasted several days. In Gdynia the massacre claimed dead of 50 people; even Moscow was horrified by his brutality. Brezhnev, not long after the occupation of Czechoslovakia had no desire to engage USSR militarily. Gomułka was replaced by Edward Gierek, who promised to stop price increases.

⁷ President of PKOL and the State Bureau of PE and sport was during 1978–1986, for the years 1986–1988 Bolesław Kapitan was re-elected. It is said after the intervention of his classmates from his studies in Moscow, Larissa Gorbachev.

available illegally made items or goods purchased in selloffs abroad. U.S. imposed economic sanctions against Poland and the USSR. They should serve as a pressure for the abolition of martial law and the release of the internees. Sanctions were lifted up in February 1987. External debt continued to grow. There was lack of money for sport, including Olympic preparation. Sports clubs experienced great development during Gierek's government. Suddenly they had no sources to finance the preparation of the athletes and their own operations. As a result, top coaches and athletes later, went to the West. Initially unofficially and later semi-officially they were leaving the country westward.⁸

CHANGES 1988/89

Aleksandr Kwasniewski⁹ was elected the head of the Polish Olympic Committee in that difficult time in 1988. In June 1988, the Communists proposed the introduction of a limited political pluralism and the establishment of a second chamber of Parliament, in which one third of seats would have been provided the opposition. The aim of this step was to involve the opposition in government, thereby legalizing the Communists themselves and also to share responsibility for all problems. In the summer of 1988 strikes broke out in Gdansk. Communist party approached the opposition leader L. Walesa, to help them to manage the situation and persuaded the workers to return to work. They promised talks with the opposition for this help. The beginning of formal negotiations dragged the strong demand for the legalization of Solidarity movement. But secretly the talks with the "illegal" Solidarity were running (Cuhra, J., 2006). The opening ceremony of roundtable negotiation began 6th February at the seat of the government. Talks continued in the Governor's Palace in Warsaw, together attended by several hundred people (Chwalba, A., 2009). General Kiszczak, W. Jaruzelski's right hand, and Prime Minister's Assistant Alexander Kwasniewski led the communist's team for negotiations. Their plan was to weaken the Solidarity through the transfer of responsibility for the problems in exchange for limited concessions. The team of Solidarity was headed by Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Final provisions, including a timetable for implementation, were signed on 5th April 1989. Economic changes inflicted the last blow to the Communist regime. In 1990 the Communist Party was dissolved under the leadership of a new communist generation, featured by Alexander Kwasniewski and Leszek Miller. It was transformed in the Social Democratic Party, and took the PZPR property.

TRANSFORMATION OF POLISH OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

Transformation of the Polish Olympic Committee in democratic times was not going easily. Polish opposition intellectuals were significantly involved in the field of sport. The Polish Olympic Committee with its old bureau, however, was a bastion of the Communist regime. Under the leadership of the Communist A. Kwasniewski, who was Minister of Youth and

⁸ The first left tennis player Wojciech Fibak, later footballers Włodzisław Smolarek or Zbysław Boniek.

⁹ Since 1977 he was a member of the Communist Party. In 1985–87 the Minister for Youth Affairs, in the years 1987–90 Chairman of the Committee of Youth and Physical Culture.

Sports in the government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki since the end of 1989 to June 1990,¹⁰ it did not come with any reform proposals or personnel changes. Solidarity tried to create a national congress, under which physical education would be re-built on democratic foundations under public control. The establishment of Solidarity Olympic institution was the result of pressure of democratic sports officials, particularly associated with the Solidarity movement, and unwillingness of PKOl to change anything. In the spring of 1989 in Gdansk the Provincial Olympic Committee (Krajowy Komitet Olimpizmu, KKOl) headed by the chairman, coach and gym teacher, Grzegorz Perski was established (Liponski, W., Lipoński, S., 2008). KKOl proposed deep reforms of sports system, distribution of financial support towards the sport for all. KKOl wanted to clean the Olympic movement from the political context and persons associated with the communist regime (Lipoński, W., interview 13th of October 2009).

The establishment of KKOl put the International Olympic Committee in a delicate situation. Solidarity movement and the persons or institutions connected with it were enormous popular in the world. However, a legitimate member of the international Olympic family was unquestionably PKOl according to the Olympic Charter. J. A. Samaranch commissioned the "third party" by solving this problem. In November 1989, he visited Warsaw's as a participant of the ceremony of 70th anniversary of the Polish Olympic Committee. In honour of this event concert of the Warsaw Philharmonic was organized by PKOl. Representatives of PKOl did not want Samaranch to talk with members of KKOl, however, IOC President met with Grzegorz Perski and other representatives of the Olympic Solidarity Committee in the foyer of the music hall and they discussed the situation of the Polish Olympic movement. The concert was delayed of one hour as a result of its discussion. They agreed that it was necessary to start negotiations on a compromise with the Polish Olympic Committee. Samaranch asked professor of the Academy of Physical Education in Poznan, an Olympic historian and a frequent critic of PKOl and the IOC itself, Wojciech Lipoński to be the mediator of the negotiation. Marathon of interviews started after another meeting of the President of the IOC and representatives of PKOl in May 1990. The negotiations between Warsaw, Gdansk and the IOC headquarters in Lausanne lasted nearly two years. During that time KKOl was renamed Public Olympic Committee (Komitet Olimpizmu Powszechnego, KOIP).

A. Kwasniewski wanted to demonstrate his efforts for reforms and for his initiative the Parliamentary Forum for the reform of physical culture was established in the turn of February and March 1990. The Forum, however, performed only cosmetic changes. The situation escalated in 1991 when Michael Bidas, associated with the Solidarity movement, became the Chairman of the Office of Physical Culture and Sport.¹¹ He began to pursue drastic financial reforms, reduced support of PE and sports from the state budget of 53%¹², and again questioned the legitimacy of the existence of the Polish Olympic Committee¹³.

¹⁰ It was the first non-communist government, in which, however, several positions, including the direction of PE and sports, were reserved for the communists.

¹¹ It was established by law 16/1991.

¹² These changes were made without feeling for diplomacy. Therefore S. Paszczyk, vice-president of PKOl and of the Central Committee for Youth and Physical Culture during communism regime, returned in 1993 the head of GKKE. LIPONSKI, W., 1996, p. 35).

¹³ Officials of PKOl emphasize that other institution associated with Olympism than the PKOl has been never acknowledged by the IOC. They talk about KKOl as marginal problem which maybe not even existed.

This led the head of the negotiating team W. Lipoński to publish “Appeal for Olympic compromise” in all Polish newspapers in autumn 1991 (Lipoński, W., Lipoński, S., 2008). He called both warring parties to the truce, at least until the upcoming session of PKOL, and to trying to restore the unity of the Polish Olympic Movement. The disagreement could affect the Polish participation in the Olympic Games in Barcelona and Albertville 1992. At the extraordinary congress of PKOL on 7th September 1991 the negotiators managed to reach a compromise solution. A. Kwasniewski ceased to insist on his candidacy for the chairmanship of the Polish Olympic Committee and even a person connected with Solidarity was not nominated for the chairmanship. Andrzej Szalewicz, a man standing outside the two warring camps, Chairman of the Badminton Federation, was elected the President of PKOL. At the same time a part of the Public Olympic Committee was co-opted to the board of the Polish Olympic Committee. W. Lipoński was elected Vice-Chairman of PKOL as the seal of the reached compromise (Lipoński, W., 1992). Polish Olympic movement relieved. The success of its most radical members would have been very dangerous for the Polish representation at the Olympic Games in 1992, because it must be delegated by the National Olympic Committee (Lipoński, W., Lipoński, W. 2008). At the last moment a split in the Olympic Movement was averted, the sharpest and deepest one in the countries of future Visegrad Four. Despite the problems described, Polish participation at the Olympics in 1992 was successful. At the Winter Olympics the Polish athletes won only one scoring position. Traditionally the summer Games were more successful. They brought 19 medals, three more than from previous Games in Seoul.

ORGANIZATION OF POLISH OLYMPIC COMMITTEE AFTER 1989

The Central Committee of physical culture survived with minor organizational adjustments to the 80's as the main state office for PE and sport. Organization of sports according to the Soviet model lasted until February 1991 when the State Office of Physical Culture and Sports was established. In 1994 it was renamed as the State Office of Physical Culture and Tourism. It was subordinated directly to the Council of Ministers and the money flowed through it towards the Polish Olympic Committee (Jaczyntowski, L., Żysko, J., 1994). In 2001, the State Office of Physical Culture and Tourism and with it the control of sport moved to the competence of the Ministry of National Education and Sport, where it fell under the Department of General Department of Sports and Sports Development Strategy. On 1st September 2005 Ministry of Sports was established, in 2007 amended the Ministry of Sport and Tourism¹⁴. Hypocrisy of “state amateurism” in companies and factories, typical for communist sport disappeared in a democratic regime. The existence of professional sports was for the first time acknowledged by a law in 1994.¹⁵ PKOL started to change with increasing dependence on private finance sources. In the amended statutes, PKOL pointed out that was a non-profit organization independent of any pressure, especially political, economic or religious.

(Author's note based on an interview with K. Hadzelek 21st October 2009).

¹⁴ Law 83/2007, statute of Ministry of Sport and Tourism.

¹⁵ Law 25/1996 about PE and Sport.

FINANCING OF POLISH OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

With the change of politic regime the Polish Olympic Committee found itself in an entirely new position. It could no longer wholly rely on the support from the state budget and had to start to look for its own sponsors. During the 90's it has developed three ways of fundraising. These were Olympic Fund, the Polish Olympic Foundation and the Marketing Department of PKOL.

History of the Polish Olympic Fund dates back to 1923 when the weekly Stadium held events for fundraising to send Polish athletes to the Olympic Games in Paris. Activities of Olympic fund were renewed in 50's after the war break. It worked throughout the communist regime; Poles living in exile contributed a large part of foreign currency. According PKOL the fund helped primarily to increased possibilities of Olympic preparation (*90 lat na olimpijskim szlaku*, p. 142). Change of the regime associated with the change of economic system and the relative decline of foreign exchange rates led to the dissolution of the Olympic fund. In 1993 Polish Olympic Foundation (PFO) was established by PKOL as an institution whose mission was marketing, promotion and sponsorship development. The sponsorship of PKOL was based primarily on telecommunications companies, breweries, automobile and electrical companies. PFO began to publish monthly *Magazyn Olimpijski* for its promotion, since 1999, a New Year meeting with sponsors' "Piknik Olimpijski" has been held. The biggest successes of PFO came in 2000-2004, when the sponsorship financed the construction of the Olympic centre, magnificent building on the Danzig waterfront in Warsaw, which is currently the seat of the Polish Olympic Committee.¹⁶ Thanks to subsidies from the Ministry of National Education and Sport, it is also home to the Museum of Sport and Tourism and of Foundation of the Olympic Education. Sponsoring companies have supplied the Centre by equipment including furniture and electrical engineering. Since 2005, the Centre is profitable by organizing exhibitions and conferences related to sport. Profit of the Centre supports the activities of the Polish Olympic Committee (*90 lat na olimpijskim szlaku*, p. 151). The activities of PFO took the marketing department of PKOL, newly created at 1st of October 2006 within the organizational changes of PKOL. Its main goal was to raise funds from sponsors for preparation for the Olympic Games in Beijing, Vancouver and London, and for the activities of PKOL.

CONCLUSION

Sport, the top sport where athletes may show up in battles with foreign competitors in particular, has always been very important for the Poles. At the time of the division of Poland among three states and during the Soviet subjugation the Poles have considered

¹⁶ The first seat of PKOL was the only room at the Ministry of Public Health. After the war it moved many times until 1985, when Warsaw councillors promised it a land at the Danzig waterfront. PKOL became the owner of this land in 1994. Since then PKOL has been searching the investor. 31st May 2004 chairman of PKOL, Polish President Kwasniewski and President of IOC A. J. Rogge participated at the ceremony when the Olympic centre was opened. Since 18th May 2005 has been called Olympic Park of John Paul II.

sport a symbol of their pride. In a democratic regime, which is accompanied by economic hardship and social frustration the top sport is the mean of relaxation again. Poles are proud that their representatives can be measured with athletes from wealthier and more developed countries.

The Polish Olympic Committee is a much respected institution. Change of regime brought for PKOl, as in other countries of the former “communist camp”, the organizational, and financial and personnel changes. Overcame the problems with Olympic Committee of Solidarity Polish Olympic Committee started to adapt itself quite well to the new situation. It managed to raise money for the construction of the representative head office and resources for the Olympic preparation of Polish athletes, despite support from the state budget has decreased considerably compared to communist times of abundance.

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POLSKÝ OLYMPISMUS V SYSTÉMU KOMUNISTICKÉHO SPORTU A JEHO RENESANCE PO ROCE 1989

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SOUHRN

Přestože olympijská organizace, tedy Polský olympijský výbor (PKOL), je v Polsku ze středoevropských zemí nejmladší, olympijské myšlenky zde byly mnohými nadšenci propagovány od samého obnovení moderních olympijských her. Přes počáteční nedůvěru intelektuálů i veřejnosti se po první světové válce olympismus rychle rozvíjel. Po skončení druhé světové války však komunistické moci sloužil jen pro soupeření s imperialistickými mocnostmi i komunistickými rivaly. O filozofii či životní postoj v žádném případě nešlo. Olympijský výbor byl zcela podřízen státní organizaci, s níž měl od padesátých let společného předsedu. Výměnou za podřízené postavení nebyl přisun státních finančních prostředků příliš omezen. Po pádu komunistického režimu a překonané hrozbě svého rozštěpení nabyl PKOL samostatnosti, zároveň však musel začít hledat i jiné finanční zdroje než ze státní pokladny.

Klíčová slova: Polsko, olympijský výbor, komunismus

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